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THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR

NOVEMBER 1986 A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

P. J. O'Rourke Turns Crimson • The Peace Corps Turns 25

SPECIAL REPORT

Rael Jean Isaac: The Scandal of Legal Services

Andrew Ferguson: Sally Quinn, Powertown Cupcake

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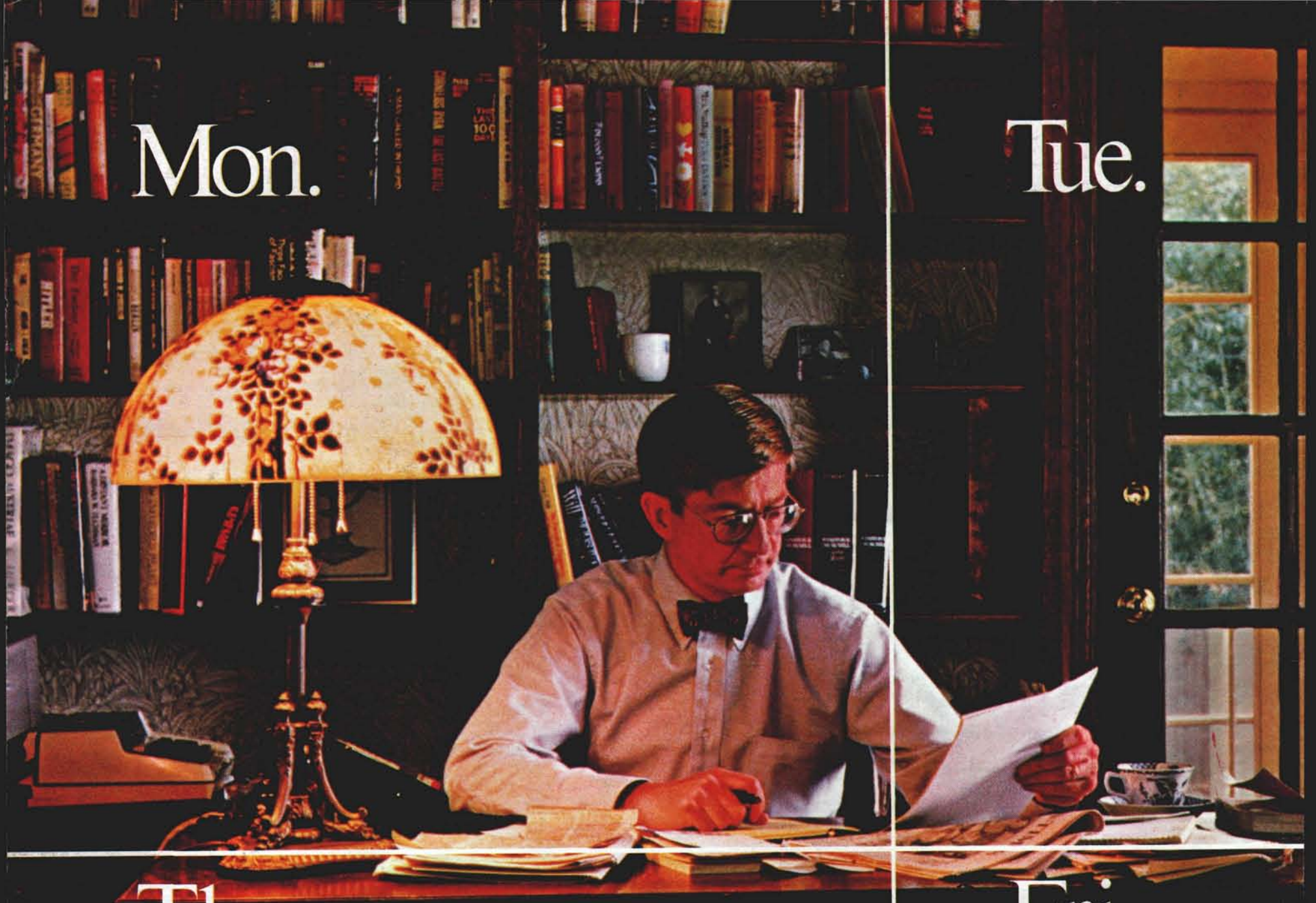

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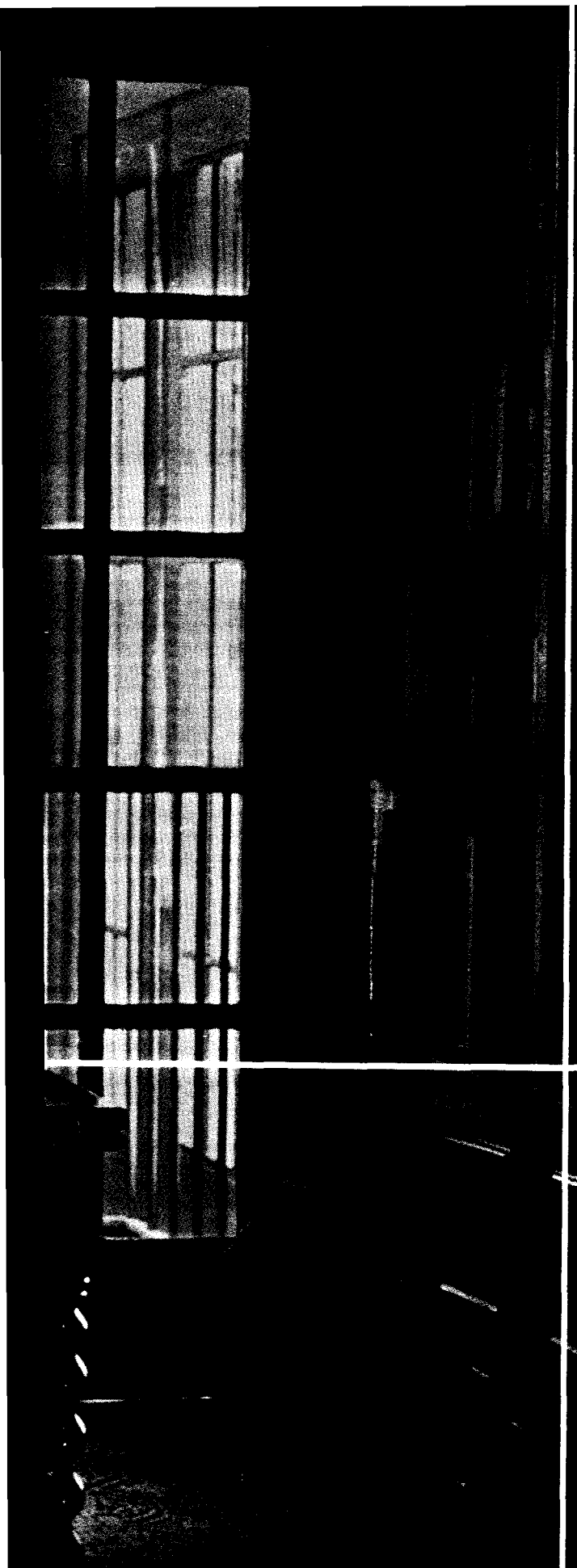

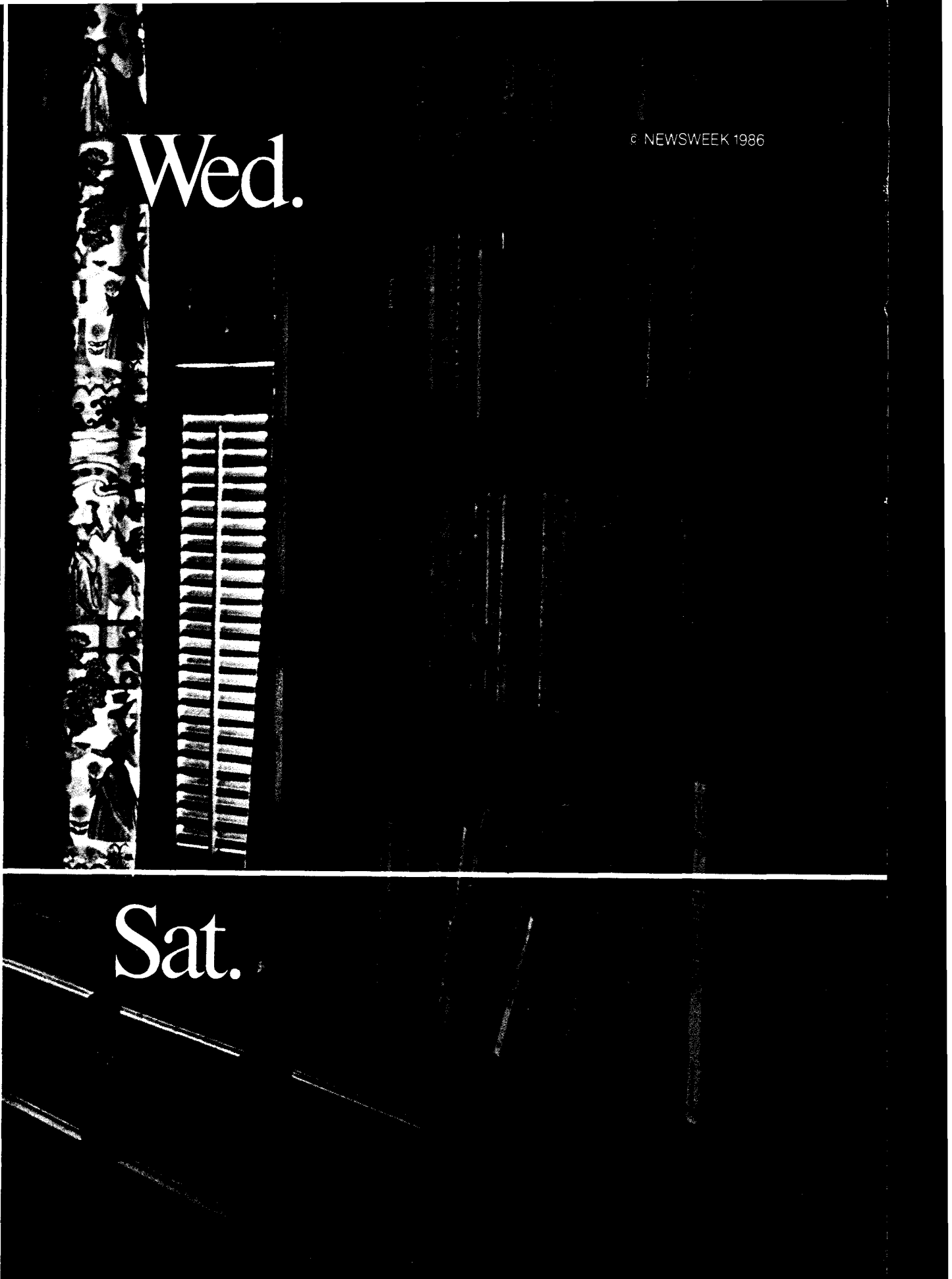

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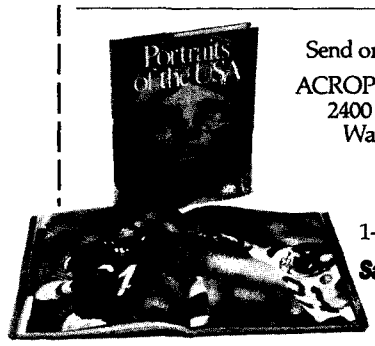

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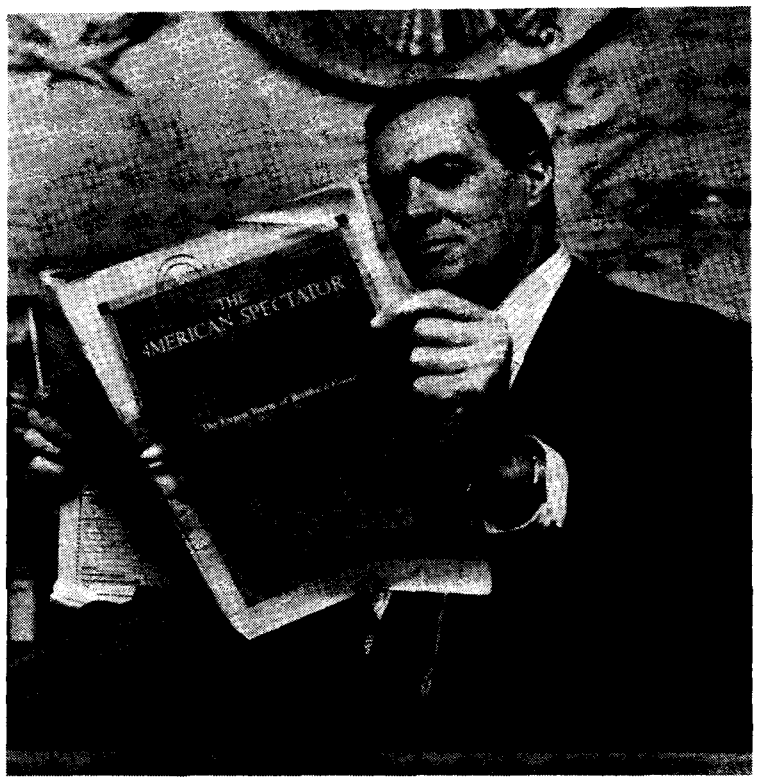

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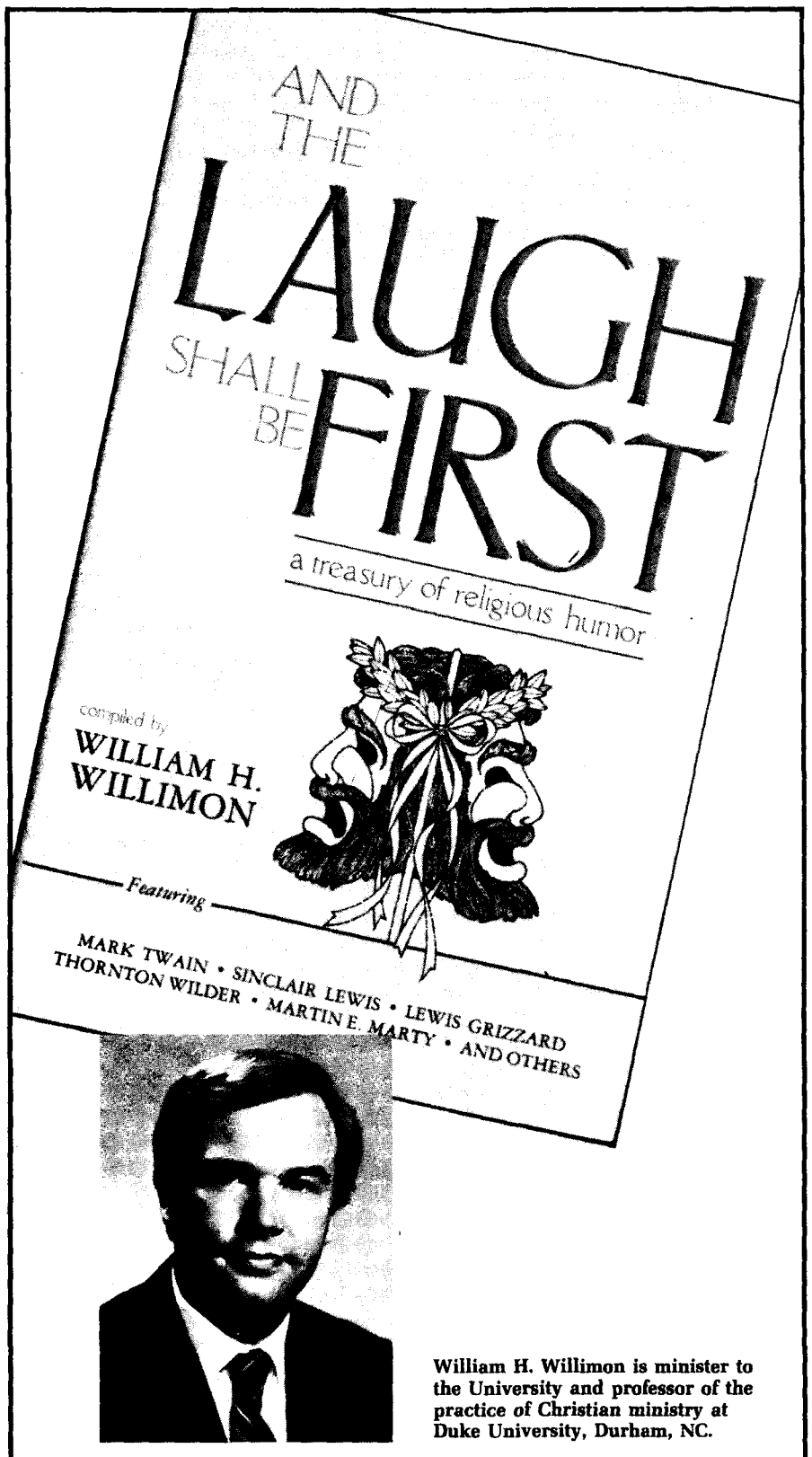
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THE CONTINUING CRISIS

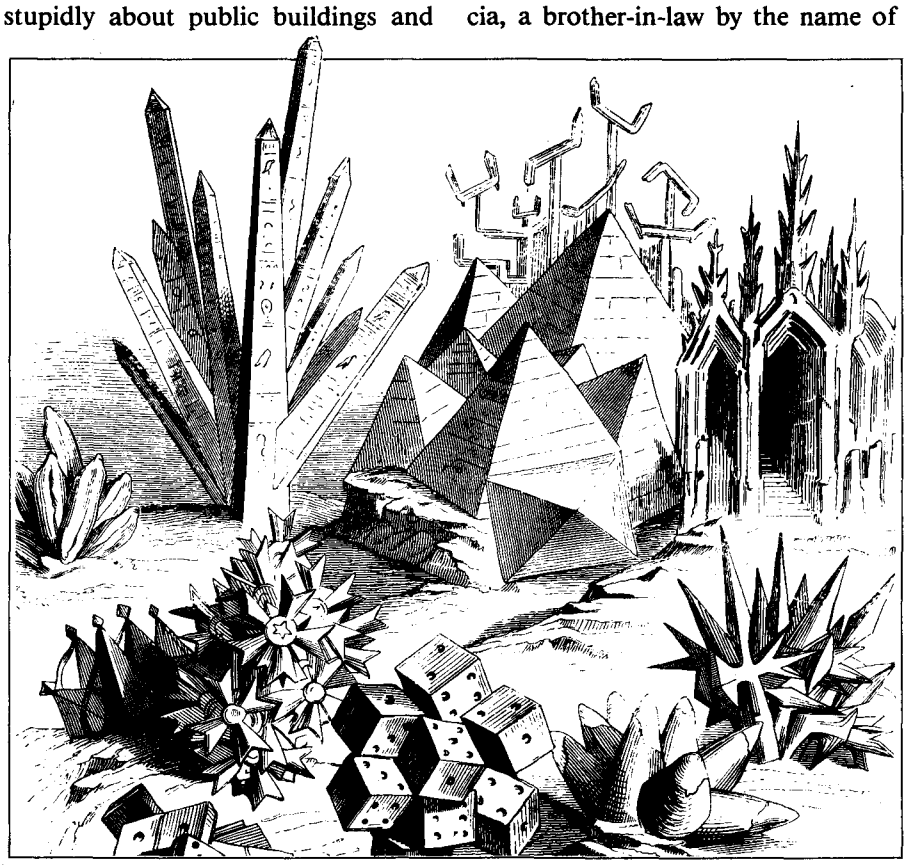
•September is no more, nor is the acrimonious question of whether conservatives have a right to participate in public life, for instance in the United States judiciary. Apparently, owing to the shocking nature of their beliefs, they do not. That is the opinion of enlightened liberalism as articulated by such moral exemplars as Senator Edward Kennedy and Senator Howard Metzenbaum, the parking lot tycoon. During Justice William Rehnquist's confirmation hearings, these two worthies and their allies were as noisy as a baby's rattle and no more intelligent, but they did make it clear that they are bigots and no more sympathetic toward the democratic process than a redneck book burner. Justice Rehnquist won confirmation 65 to 33, and the baby rattles cited the closeness of the vote as evidence of his limitations rather than of theirs.

•The suppression of Bishop Tutu continues; on September 7, he was installed as Archbishop of Cape Town in Cape Town. In observance of Harvard's 350th anniversary Prince Charles delivered to an assemblage of Harvard alumni and faculty members an erudite address on his stamp collection, when he will again wear short pants in public, and why all the English girls he knows wear white gloves in mixed company. Mr. Walter Cronkite came, too. Two ganefs wearing Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter masks knocked off two more Cincinnati-area banks. The Rev. Pat Robertson edged closer to declaring his presidential candidacy, and in Raleigh, North Carolina, former President Jimmy Carter said that the Rev. Jerry Falwell could "in a very Christian way . . . go to hell." Mr. Michael Moore, who had become editor of *Mother Jones* vowing to inject humor into the left-wing magazine, has been fired after but four laugh-packed months. The agelastic heir of a mining fortune who has been bankrolling *MJ* for years ended the frivolity.

•The *Journal of the American Medical Association*'s annual back-to-school issue reported its disappointing findings that students who exchange bodily fluids with multiple sex partners increase their chances of contracting hepatitis B by over 300 percent. Miss Geraldine Ferraro's natural son, John Zaccaro, Jr., dropped out of Middlebury College, to devote himself full-time to mixology and to defending himself against the absurd charge that he trafficked in illicit drugs. In Turin, Italy Mr. Silvano Traisci, vice president of Italy's National Association for the Protection of Animals, appealed to Pope John Paul II to end his baleful habit of referring to the devil in zoological terms. The problem reached crisis dimensions in August when the Pope began identifying Satan as either a serpent or a dragon, causing Italian pet owners to grow apprehensive about walking their exotic pets in public.

•Allah's finest took over a Pan Am jet in Karachi, Pakistan, herded 384 defenseless passengers together, and fired away, killing 15 and wounding 127. Two days later two more degenerates massacred 21 out of 30 worshippers in an Istanbul synagogue. Paris became the scene of repeated bombings, and Mr. Nicholas Daniloff, an American journalist, was arrested in Moscow for accepting a controversial package from a shadowy figure in the Lenin Hills. The Reagan Administration acted bizarrely, and Daniloff was released to his wife on September 29.

•Mr. Henry Moore died at the venerable age of 88 after leaving thousands of gently marmoreal boluses lying stupidly about public buildings and other open spaces like so many gigantic dog droppings created not by the mind of a superior artist but by the repeated valsalvic maneuvers of a mere quadruped. No one ever made Mr. Moore clean up after himself. Worse, people actually paid him for his excreta! Dr. Rene Richards, the transsexual colossus and tennis freak, was subpoenaed in Manhattan to reply to charges that he once injected Miss Martina Navratilova with sufficient quantities of hormones to transform the lady tennis virtuosa into a "chemical superwoman" capable of causing $2 million of ruin to the person of Mr. Seitz, photographer of the stars. According to Mr. Seitz, the assault took place in 1982, and he has employed Mr. Marvin Michelson to chauffeur his charges through a court of law. That long-awaited tome purporting to explicate the mystery of how Ronald Reagan and his brain trust stole America from its rightful owners was finally published. *The Rise of the Counter-Establishment: From Conservative Ideology to Political Power*, written by the barely civilized Mr. Sidney Blumenthal, will not be widely quoted. It is almost unreadable. Even his grateful gushes to ma and pa, wife Jackie, sons Max & Paul, sister Marcia, a brother-in-law by the name of Fields, grandma Minnie ("We all miss her and cherish her memory"), colleagues numerous beyond the bounds of the creditable, a literary agent of stupendous gifts, a sorely-pressed copy editor (now with grandma Minnie?), and various public-spirited foundations—even these testimonials are barely literate and as unconvincing as his text.



•Rock Hudson's disease claimed the life of yet another designer of luxury interiors, that being Mr. Robin L. Jacobsen, 45. Mr. Jerry Smith, the Washington Redskins' former tight end, admitted that he too has AIDS, and six days after his parents won a ten-month struggle to have Ryan Thomas admitted to school, the four-year-old AIDS victim was suspended for biting another child during play. In Madisonville, Kentucky, Mr. Arthur L. Gardner's plans to exhume his father's body "for the resurrection" were delayed when local authorities jugged Mr. Marshall for stealing a hearse.

•As if Planned Parenthood did not already have enough to worry about with the population explosion in the Third World and Miss Madonna advocating adolescent parturition in America, the Mattel toy company has announced plans to market a doll that actually becomes pregnant. Brown University is contending with yet more scandal. A feminist porn magazine devoted to the proposition that a girl can have a mind equally as dirty as a man's has appeared on campus; and the irrepressible Miss Amy Carter, a Brown coed, has taken to appearing in public with a smutty button on her bodice. In Garden Grove, California, 35-year-old Mr. Scott Norman beat a laundromat washing machine senseless to rescue a child who was trapped inside. The girl emerged spotless and unharmed. In Dixmoor, Illinois, a prostitute perished when 374-pound Mr. Enoch Brown III sat on her during a business transaction.

•In Manhattan Mr. Robert Chambers, 19, was charged with the murder of Miss Jennifer Dawn Levin, despite the young man's plea that her death was accidental, the result of a sexual accouplement gone haywire. The young Shah of Iran shocked Iranian yokels by appearing mysteriously on their TV screens and delivering a brief address

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critical of the Ayatollah and of the quality of life now being experienced in Iran. An animal lover in Nairobi, Kenya, who was being tried for allegedly taking sexual liberties with an unidentified cow, evoked laughter from jurors and magistrates alike when he averred that he "could not seek sexual intercourse with a girl because I was scared of contracting AIDS." The Dow Jones Index dropped by four-and-a-half percent in early September, and former President Gerald Ford hosted a conference on "Humor and the Presidency." A more exigent conference might have been held on "Exhaustion and the Presidency." Throughout the month rumors reverberated through Washington to the effect that the President's men are tuckered out. They bungle the arrest of an American journalist in Moscow, they pant for summits and arms control accords with an increasingly belligerent Soviet Union. On September 23 they whooped it up when their negotiators turned out a sausage entitled "Final Document of the Stockholm Conference of Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe." If all goes well, just hours before the Soviet Union launches World War III, Moscow will by treaty have to notify us. Not even Jimmy Carter made that kind of a gentlemen's agreement. The White House tires you. *—RET*

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A Note from the Publisher

Knowing that a few *American Spectator* subscribers have experienced some delay in the processing of their subscriptions, we have fired our computer—or more specifically, our computer service center. *TAS* has returned to Creative Processing Systems Data Center, a firm that provided our 40,000 subscribers with excellent service from 1975 to 1984. We will continue to provide you with the high quality service you deserve and have paid for.

—Ronald E. Burr
Publisher

Bad Bradley

I trust Fred Barnes merely was being provocative in suggesting Bill Bradley (1985 ADA rating: 85) as a presidential choice for conservatives in 1988 ("Conservatives and the Democratic 10," *TAS*, September 1986). The crafty Mr. Barnes surely realizes that the election of any Democrat would be an unhappy experience for most of the *Spectator*'s readers, in that it would lead to the filling of countless mid- to upper-level posts with appointees drawn from the Democratic party's bank of political operatives. The differences in ideology between the two parties, which are sometimes masked at the top, are quite pronounced at this drone level. Just compare the congressional staffs (or the votes of House members, for that matter). This is why the election of *any* Republican would be preferable from the *Spectator*'s perspective, in terms of nuts-and-bolts government. The only basis for arguing otherwise would lie in the belief that the defeat of a milquetoast Republican would be salutary for that party's, and the country's, future.

Obvious as all this may be, there is a powerful longing in some quarters to make the Democratic party what it once was, or how nostalgia would have us remember it. This may explain the enshrining of patriot Henry Jackson, a labor collectivist and energy socialist, or the frequent recitation of John F. Kennedy's stirring *words* before and after the setbacks in Berlin, Cuba, and elsewhere.

These references might score debating points, but they obscure history. As a matter of fact, the record of Kennedy's administration (yes, including the Heller tax cut) serves to illustrate what we could expect from one of the tough new Democrats.

—Tim W. Ferguson
New York, New York

Poor Fred Barnes. Here is one of America's most brilliant political observers reduced by his optimism to reading hopeful signs in the fulminations of the Democratic party's current gaggle of presidential candidates. Surely Mr. Barnes knows that what a politician says has little relation to what he believes and still less to how he would run the country.

I'm not saying that all politicians are liars, but many have an unusual definition of the truth, and it is not just my Republican prejudices which lead me to suggest that Democrats are more creative in those definitions than Republicans. Remember FDR and the balanced budget issue of 1932? How about JFK and the missile gap, or LBJ, the peace candidate?

Except in the odd case of a Ronald Reagan, candidates will say what will get them elected. We elect a party to the White House more than a man these days and the Democratic party shows no willingness to move rightward. Its candidates may create a smoke screen but that's only to confuse the yokels. The party members who will write the platform, fill the cabinet, and set the agenda show no sign of becoming enlightened.

The Democrats currently believe that the Reagan eighties are like the Eisenhower fifties: a breathing space between liberal onslaughts. Walter Mondale in 1984, like Adlai Stevenson in 1956, made one of those last stands liberals love so much. Neither of them made any real attempt to move to the center because they knew they were doomed, so they went down with all flags flying to inspire the troops next time around. The Democratic candidate in 1988, like John Kennedy in 1960, will sound like a centrist. But rest assured, if the Democrats gain the White House in 1988, they will pursue the liberal agenda as if 1980 and 1984 never occurred.

It will take the loss of at least one or two more presidential elections before the Democrats even begin to reexamine their assumptions.

Get Cyrus Vance, Theodore Sorensen, and Robert McNamara to endorse Star Wars in a special issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Mr. Barnes, and then we'll talk.

—Thomas F. Berner
New York, New York

Vernon Young 1912-1986

The passing of Vernon Young this August left numerous publications, including this one, the poorer. He died at the age of 73 in Philadelphia.

For almost all of his adult life Vernon Young worked for a living as a free-lance critic. He was able to survive—barely—by bringing to the trade tremendous scope. He wrote perceptively and with authority on film, art, and literature (showing a particular feel for poetry and travel writing). When any of these forms dealt at all with nature he was especially attuned. The markets for his writings included quarterlies (he was the *Hudson Review*'s contributing editor for film for over thirty years), magazines, and newspapers, and though he depended critically on this work for his livelihood, he was never opportunistic in it. If a book had no merit he preferred to return it to the editor rather than to compose a negative and, as it surely would have been, amusing review. His essays, written in an elaborate and witty style, lost none of their thoroughness from subject to subject, nor from year to year.

In his last years he had a rather antiquated appearance—tall, gaunt, formal in dress and often displeased in temper. Yet, while frequently disappointed in life, he found much cause for pleasure in art and nature, and—as a critic—spent his days alerting us to it.

—Thomas Swick

Fred Barnes replies:

Sorry, Tim, but I wasn't just being provocative, though your point is certainly a good one. One only has to recall the experience of the Carter presidency to understand how sub-cabinet officials can set a liberal course for a Democratic administration, even if the guy in the White House isn't a liberal. But that doesn't always have to be the case. There is another basis, besides defeating a wimp Republican, for preferring a Democrat. It's possible, after all, for a Democratic President to embrace a new crowd that's not dominated by the parasitic liberal crew in Washington, and usher them into his administration. Okay, I'm not holding my breath. Anyway, most voters don't make their presidential preference based on who's going to be assistant secretary of transportation for road repairs. They vote on what they see and hear. That's why some conservatives—not activists, but ordinary folks—might pick a Bill Bradley over a George Bush. There's a recent precedent for this, the 1976 election. I know a number of conservatives who voted for Carter. Later they regretted it.

As for you, Mr. Berner, flattery won't get me to say uncle. I'd like to clear up one of your misconceptions: Reagan is not God. (Neither is Mario Cuomo. When Cuomo declared recently that he isn't God, Mark Russell noted that this was the first flip-flop of the 1988 presidential race.) Now, I think Reagan is a great leader, but he's also a politician. He, like FDR, promised a balanced budget, but hasn't delivered. Do you think he should, if that means raising taxes? I don't. Look, I didn't say the Democratic party was veering madly to the right. I said there had been a few encouraging signs, and that conservatives ought to take a look at several potential Democratic presidential candidates. Trouble is, the candidates that conservatives might like either aren't inclined to run, or don't stand much of a chance of winning. I said that, too.

(continued on page 54)

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EDITORIALS

HOODWINKED

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Across the Great Republic our noble politicos have now auspicated their off-year elections, and on one matter both sides agree: this election lacks a national theme. In 1982 the Democrats made the economy the national theme, and the Republicans lost twenty-six seats. Now there is no theme, and according to Mr. Joseph Gaylord, executive director of the National Republican Congressional Committee, "that helps." He and many of his colleagues are relieved that only a dozen or so Republican members of the House of Representatives are expected to perish in the voting booths. In comparable off-year elections as many as forty-eight representatives from the President's party have bitten the dust. Thus this themeless election pleases many Republicans. They are apparently unaware that the comparable off-year elections of 1966 and 1974 were dominated by war and Watergate. By contrast, Ronald Reagan's six years in office have been a success. His opponents are bankrupt; they offer no plausible alternatives.

Once again Republicans have been hoodwinked by their crafty opposition. There are two themes available this election. The first is the success of Reagan conservatism. The second is the Democrats' disunity and lack of alternatives. If, owing to their timidity, the Republicans do not capitalize on their success and lose the Senate, their President will be forced to battle both houses on the budget, foreign policy, and judicial appointments. Suddenly the Democrats' amazing truculence—displayed most recently over the Rehnquist appointment—will confuse and envenom every presidential initiative. Dozens of false issues will destroy the relative tranquillity of the present. The new political era that Ronald Reagan's conservatism and the liberals' futile radicalism have ushered in will be endangered.

In the art of politics, misstatement is an essential skill. Over the years the masters of misstatement have with admirable regularity been Democrats. Six years into the most successful presidency of modern times the Democrats preemptively declare that no national theme exists, and the credulous Republicans acquiesce. The Democrats attribute the success of Ronald Reagan, whom they scorned as a has-been and a clod as recently as 1979, to a sudden burst of charm acquired at age 70, and the Republicans agree. They even agree with the dubious Democratic claim that though Ronald Reagan is admired his policies are loathed. How often has a politician been elected by ever larger margins though his policies be loathed? Do the Republicans agree with the Democrats that what the American people really want are higher taxes, more inflation, more government regulation, a feeble defense—in fine, all the miseries bequeathed them by that Carter Administration of unwelcome memory?

By and large, Democrats are simply better campaigners than the Republicans, not only because of their mastery of misstatement but also because, unlike the Republicans, the Democrats relish a campaign. Their campaigns never end. They are always in search of some new babies to kiss, some new constituency to embrace. In recent years they have actually dreamed up a few constituencies, for instance the handicapped and homosexuals.

Even at their national conventions, with all the diverse and embittered special pleaders assembled, the Democrats transform what could be a gruesome session into a grand old time. Even behind such fated candidates as 1972's McGovern and 1984's Mondale they depart the convention full of fire and vows to slay the dastardly Republicans. Given their futile policies and the number of cranks among them, the Democrats do surprisingly well. By contrast, Republican campaigns are tedious, their conventions soporific. At the Republicans' last national convention the only speaker who evoked memorable whoops was Jeane Kirkpatrick, a lapsed Democrat.

And so once again the Republicans are unhappily out there on the campaign trail, the Democrats having hoodwinked them into believing that they have nothing to say. If they lose the Senate, however, it will not be because the Democrats had more attractive alternatives but because the Republicans did not stir up the electorate. Republicans will not be defeated by superior policies but by Democratic cleverness and by voter indifference. Then what could have been an era of Republican dominance will end with Ronald Reagan. □

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post *column syndicated by King Features.*

THE FALL SEASON

Henceforth the American Broadcasting Corporation, or ABC, as it is called, shall be known as the Network of Conscience. This fall it joins with the Public Broadcasting Service, or PBS, in a vast campaign to smite illiteracy, particularly adult illiteracy, in America, a nation whose benightedness has increased with each additional educational dollar that the government spends. The campaign has been named Project Literacy U.S., or PLUS, and its pollens blow even now through ABC's "World News Tonight," "This Week With David Brinkley," "20/20," "Nightline," "Good Morning America," and more.

It does seem curious for a network suddenly to manifest such solicitude for the printed word. Most viewers need hardly any language skills to roost gleefully in ABC's audience. In fact, the more literate one is the less likely he is to be in ABC's audience, save to throw an occasional spitball or to have a rude laugh. Television's defenders boast of how, with its high tech wizardry, television is an enormous advance over those gray pages that bring information so slowly and arduously to readers. Scholars, of course, have harvested fields of data proving television's unwelcome influence on the national mind. It misinforms, lowers artistic standards, and diverts viewers from reading things they really ought

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to read. Recently, a study from the National Assessment of Educational Progress demonstrated that television often has an adverse influence on children's reading ability, an embarrassing finding that the promoters of PLUS deal with very gingerly in their promotional literature.

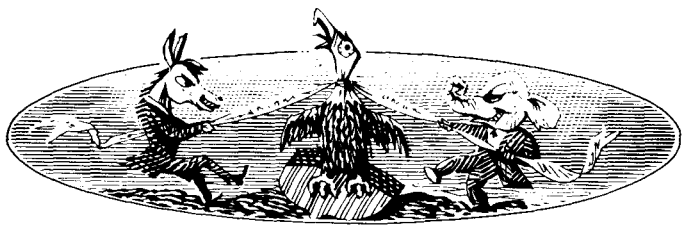
The precise nature of how television misinforms can be seen in the gravamen of ABC's literacy campaign. Here the illiterate is presented as a victim of American society, a consequence of insufficient government spending. Illiteracy is, says one of the project's barkers, "the hidden disease that threatens the well-being of the country." Once again, TV sends reality down to the makeup room, and when it emerges it has been transformed into gaudy fantasy, all for an improved Nielsen rating.

Actually, illiteracy in America is a complicated matter. Both the Department of Education and the Census Bureau place illiteracy at 13-14 percent of the adult population, but this tells us little. Nearly a third of these people are not American-born, and many do not speak English at all. Doubtless many are competent in their native tongues, and advocates of bilingual education are disinclined to rush these people into English. In many immigrant neighborhoods they get along adequately. Many have no desire to speak English. These are not victims of government retrenchment. The U.S. Department of Education spends more than $100 million on seventy-nine adult illiteracy programs and related research.

To be sure there are high school graduates entering adult life with inadequate language skills, but 70 percent of our English-speaking illiterates never complete high school. The problem is not lack of remedial English courses for adults but that some students are not learning, and as Secretary of Education William Bennett observed in August in his report on elementary schools, this country does a rather good job of teaching students to read. Residual illiteracy in this country frequently is a consequence of inadequate motivation, and aside from coercion it is hard to think of any government program that can instill that motivation.

ABC's portrayal of illiterate adults as victims of failed programs is inaccurate. What is more, ABC's campaign is disingenuous. Broadcast media have steadily diminished the importance of reading and writing. Fewer and fewer writers are welcomed into media to talk intelligently on serious matters. The venerable educator Jacques Barzun deplores the discontinuation, years ago, of media programs that stressed literacy and learning. Secretary Bennett challenges ABC to broadcast reading lessons before sports programs. I would be content if sports commentators would speak standard English and employ English subtitles to compensate for the defective elocution. The fact is, television is hostile to print. Its personalities recoil from mentioning books or a guest's books. How would ABC feel if one-fifth of its audience gave up an hour of daily television for an evening newspaper, a book, or a magazine? Television communicates with pictures, as did the caveman. □

CAPITOL IDEAS



ASIA WATCH

by Tom Bethell

From the air Tokyo's outskirts looked as trim and orderly as a sunlit landscape in a child's picture book. It was a long bus ride into the city, past compact, economical pastures. To our left a Disneyland castle, then onto an elevated motorway, and so into the center of the awesome metropolis, spread out around us for miles like a gigantic Swiss watch. Office buildings teemed with toilers after 6 p.m. At the Tokyo Hilton we were greeted by deeply bowing kimono'd figures. Marion Magid said that Tokyo made New York seem like Calcutta.

Growing up I used to think that London was the big city of the world (having been born there). So I continued to believe until I arrived in New York in 1962. Now, as a group of us drove by taxi through the center of Tokyo, it dawned on me that this was the new New York, the world's leading city. I retained this impression over the next three days.

It's hard to say what provokes such emotional judgments. In Tokyo's case it had something to do with a sense of order, almost a tranquillity, pervading this immense industriousness. Such a sense of order probably can only be felt when a country is at its peak, as one guesses must be the case with Japan today. Everyone seemed to be well dressed. The children in their straw bonnets seemed to echo an earlier and better time in the West. The Japanese will no doubt look back on this as their golden age.

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator*'s Washington correspondent.*

As in Korea, the sense of a huge, middle class moving forward in unison was overwhelming. How long they can keep it up is open to question. If they take a wrong turn the whole country will tend to take it in lockstep. One senses the possibility that the Japanese could lose heart for some unpredictable reason. For one thing they have almost slavishly imitated so many things American. It's as though their national ambition is to outproduce us, and now that they have (I guess) succeeded in doing so, they may pause to wonder, fatally, what the point was. Then again, it occurred to me they just might go ahead and build SDI without waiting for us. That would give them something to do.

At the U.S. Embassy we were addressed by Ambassador Mike Mansfield, who spoke to us from behind a desk, like an old Presbyterian Sunday school teacher. He recited statistics from memory, but his wisdom was of the conventional kind. Our $50 billion-a-year trade deficit with Japan was "intolerable," he said. Why this should be I don't know. They send us cars and television sets and we send them pieces of paper manufactured at the Bureau of Engraving & Printing (called dollars). Why is this a bad deal for us?

Prices in Tokyo were a shock—buying anything at all made one feel like a rube in the big city for the first time. A newsstand offered a three-day-old *New York Times* for $8. Next I saved $5 by not buying a cup of coffee. I went to a very good record store, called Wave, in Roppongi, where they had American jazz records not available at any U.S. record store. Evidently they had also bought up stocks of records available in American stores in the fifties and sixties and were now selling them for $50 each.

We must move on hurriedly to Peking. At the Sheraton Great Wall the *China Daily* was slipped under our hotel doors. It had stock market news ("Gold, Platinum Prices Soar on World Marts"), cricket scores, and *no* anti-American stories whatsoever as far as I could see; a big contrast to the Japanese English-language papers.

There was a big Kodak ad in Tiananmen Square, where the masses used to mobilize at Mao's bidding, and many smaller ads on Democracy Wall. There's not much to Peking—no "there" there. Off the main roads were miserable miles of hovels hidden in the bushes. But there were lots of construction cranes in place, some of them working. The Chinese we met seemed to be pro-American, and Peking itself seemed far less repressive than Moscow. It is almost certainly the Chinese city where the Communist Party has retained greatest control, yet even here the sense of movement was to me palpable. It was also moving to see these poor people whose talents have been suppressed for so long but whose time of release may now be at hand.

We had fierce disputes about the future of China. "China is a big nothing!" said Arnold Beichman, the leader of the once-Leninist, always-Leninist faction—resolutely opposed to sentimental optimism about China.

But Alvin Rabushka of the Hoover Institution expressed a cautious optimism. →

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"Women squatting on their haunches selling screws and junk," replied Beichman. "Junk! Junk of junk, that's subjunk. *Shmattas* [rags]. They take big *shmattas* and they make little *shmattas*. From that you're going to get a consumer economy? C'mon Alvin!"

"They didn't even sell screws and rags five years ago."

"You're dreaming! They're not going to give up Leninism."

"You know how the Moonies call themselves Christians?" Jude Wanniski said. "That's how the Chinese call themselves Leninists."

"Leninism is a theory of power," Beichman said. "They cannot give up power." Later, as he was getting onto the bus, he said despondently, almost to himself: "The trouble is no one reads Lenin. They just hear about it."

Chinese bicycle flotillas floated silently down the street. I found a way to thread my way through them, and so came to the Beijing Hotel across the street. Disheveled, sunburned Scandinavians lolled in the lobby. Packs were unstrapped from backs; pipe-puffing Third World intellectuals were seated at tables. No doubt China made them uneasy, too. We went upstairs to a reception given by the People's Institute of Foreign Affairs. Our ambassador, Winston Lord, came to the reception, as he did to our meeting with the deputy foreign minister. Lord, whose wife is Chinese, contrived to be diplomatic without being merely reserved, and he made a good impression on our group.

The hardliners on our tour had one unassailable point. China's draconian population control policy—one child per family—makes a mockery of the idea that the Communist Party has yielded power. If officials can check up on the menstrual cycle of tens of millions of women they can control anything. The policy is bound to have a destructive effect on China if it is implemented for any length of time. (Moreover, if China really does modernize it will need all the people it can get.) It crossed my mind that the Chinese might have adopted this atrocious policy at the behest of American population planners, and I was wondering whether one could discern the not-so-fine hand of Robert S. McNamara, the Rockefeller Fund, et al., when I was introduced to a refined Chinese who had been educated at the American school in Peking before World War II. I told him that I had grave misgivings about their population control policy . . .

"I was talking to McNamara about it only the other day," he said.

"Not *Robert* McNamara . . ."

Indeed. The same.

I assured him that Robert McNamara had been wrong about everything from the Ford Edsel to the Tanzanian development model, when the urbane gentleman interrupted me.

"He is a friend of mine," he said.

Actually, he added, McNamara had also suggested that the program seemed draconian, so I shouldn't grumble perhaps, but he also confirmed my suspicion that the Chinese had adopted this policy in the mistaken belief that Westerners Know Best. (Communism itself was of course an earlier Western import.) Alas, there is a certain logical difficulty involved in an American telling a Chinese not to listen to American advice. But I did my best with several people in the room. The answer I always received was that, if the population policy did turn out to be harmful, it would be abandoned. But by then immense damage would already have been done.

The Chinese, I believe, do sense America's spiritual weakness (epitomized by Reagan's recent Summit groveling). I gather they were privately appalled by our ignominious retreat from Vietnam, and they must wonder whether we have the will to do anything other than bully our allies. In short, the Chinese surely understand that if they are to withstand Soviet aggression they

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must do it on their own. The U.S. is totally unreliable (as I also told as many Chinese as I could lay my hands on).

Thus China will have to build up its own military strength quickly, which will require a modernized economy. There is only one way that can be achieved (as the Chinese know by now, having had the opportunity to observe their countrymen in Taiwan and Hong Kong): by permitting voluntary exchange, free prices, and contracts. All this can happen under the protective disguise of socialist labels and without sacrificing political power (as the Kuomintang showed in Taiwan). This, as succinctly as I can put it, is the case for optimism about China's economic liberalization.

We went on to the Philippines, and here we were recognizably in the Third World: rusted corrugated roofs atop lean-to sheds, drooping banana-plant fronds, great big modern building occupied by U.S. Agency for International Development in the middle of Manila. Here we dole out our destructive welfare. We went to the U.S. Embassy, where they were building anti-terrorist barricades at the gates. Inside Stephen Bosworth and the "country team" told us that we should support a big increase in U.S. foreign aid to the Philippines—to be mainlined like heroin directly into the Philippine budget.

Will these people never learn? I'm beginning to think it would be a good idea for the Filipinos to kick us out of Clark Field and Subic Bay. That's the only way Congress will be persuaded to shut off the foreign-aid spigot. As long as the dollars flow in, Mrs. Aquino & Co. won't be able to get an undistorted picture of the Philippine economy.

We were granted an "audience" with Mrs. Aquino at the Malacanañg guest house where she has semi-democratically taken up residence, a few paces from the palace. The red carpet was curled up at the edges, almost tripping the accidental president on her approach. Standing about were medalsome military and an odd bevy of female aides de camp. "We want to instill in our people the desire for self-reliance," Mrs. A. said, a few weeks before coming to Washington on a begging mission for more handouts. "We can only help ourselves: with the assistance, of course, of other peoples."

We stood in line to shake her hand. Arnold Beichman was wearing his Adam Smith tie with the knot on a level with his breast pocket, the two top buttons of his shirt undone. His spectacles were attached to a chain and bouncing off his stomach.

Someone asked Mrs. Aquino if he could "be of any help" when she came to Washington. She gave a dimpled smile.

"Have you noticed there's a kind of euphoria that seizes people in the presence of power?" Beichman said, as we moved away. " 'Be of any help' in Washington!"

Waiting outside in the bus later, Neil Livingstone, a terrorism expert who was on the tour (and had noted the minimal security of Peking's public buildings), had kept his eyes open in the Malacañang. "She's very exposed," he said. "Guards lollygagging; no sensors; no closed circuit TV; doors not heavily reinforced; nothing on top of the walls; when she came in no Secret Service equivalent. And look at those overhanging branches. You don't see that at the White House. Twenty men could take this. No surveillance of the streets, it looks like. The question is how close a parked truck could get to the guest house."

The bus drove off, past the guest house. Neil noted how close it was to the wall. "A car bomb could level the whole building," he said. □

(Tom Bethell visited East Asia in August with the World Media Association. Part one of his report, "Seoul Searching," appeared in last month's issue.)

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Chester E. Finn, Jr.

GIVING SHAPE TO CULTURAL CONSERVATISM

Tenets, anyone?

The most important political idea of the mid-1980's is cultural conservatism," wrote Paul Weyrich in the *Washington Post* in early May. Inasmuch as Weyrich and his colleagues at the Free Congress Research and Education Foundation appear to have coined the term "cultural conservatism," his high regard for it is readily understood. But let's also consider the possibility that such admiration is justified, indeed that cultural conservatism may turn out to be more than an important idea. It may also be an inspired strategy for sustaining what Ronald Reagan has begun, through unification of otherwise fractious conservatives around something more durable than shared contempt for a single opponent or mutual enthusiasm for the incumbent President.

I will not here attempt a conservative taxonomy. Readers already understand more or less how the "New Right" differs from the Old, what neoconservatives and paleoconservatives do and don't have in common, wherein libertarians can be distinguished from premodernists, and so forth. There are plenty of such differences, though they aren't always on public display. Sometimes they are masked for mutual advantage, sometimes cushioned by the convenient social reality that various conservative factions don't dine together all that often, indeed tend to assemble mainly when embarked upon a substantive project of mutual interest. But when differences are allowed to hang out, as at the recent, much-publicized meeting of the Philadelphia Society, they turn out to be deep-seated, even fierce.

The Reagan phenomenon has tended to suppress those differences, as did the McGovern-Carter cycle that preceded it. But as we look to the future, it is altogether possible that conservatives (and the Republican party, now indisputably our party) will disintegrate into factions and fractions and internal interest groups. That, as liberals (and Democrats) have so clearly shown in the post-McGovern era, is a recipe for political disaster. It is also the surest way to lose momentum, abdicate leadership, and surrender public approbation. This will happen as soon as the not-very-ideological suburbanite says to his neighbor: those guys (read conservatives, or Republicans) are just a bunch of politicians, always bickering and horsetrading, standing for nothing in particular, greedily parceling out the spoils among their various pressure groups and constituencies when they aren't busy clobbering one another.

It must be assumed that liberalism will meticulously note, publicize, and exploit every crack, tension, and family quarrel within conservatism. This began in the *New Republic* in midsummer, in an issue the cover of which trumpeted "The Conservative Mental Breakdown." In one of several essays therein, John B. Judis recounted the Philadelphia Society events a few months earlier: "The traditionalists accused the neoconservatives of being social science technicians rather than philosophers, and of assisting in the very 'politicization' of society that conservatism had been pledged to resist. They also accused the neoconservatives of being welfare-state liberals and cultural modernists who had appropriated the term and spoils of conservatism for purely opportunistic ends."

As Judis aptly notes, "A movement's loss of a philosophical core is often the first sign of its decline." I don't know any conservative who yet foresees decline, but it's surely time to do what we can to strengthen the philosophical core, indeed to reformulate a core that most conservatives of various stripes can agree on.

Can the single phrase "cultural conservatism" furnish the basis for so ambitious a result? Not by itself, of course. But if the general idea gets elaborated into a credo, a set of principles or body of doctrine to which most conservatives can subscribe, then perhaps it can supply some of the glue previously furnished by having a common opponent (McGovernism, Carterism, defeatism) and more recently by having a champion in the Oval Office.

Weyrich characterized cultural conservatism in this way:

> We believe that there is an unbreakable link between traditional Western, Judeo-Christian values and the secular success of Western societies. These values, which include definitions of right and wrong and ways of thinking and living, have brought about the prosperity, liberty and opportunity for fulfillment that Western societies have offered their citizens. These will be lost if we abandon those values.

Unexceptionable, no? But just the skeleton of a credo, not muscular enough or fleshy enough to rally round.

Weyrich adviser William S. Lind, one of the leading theoreticians of cultural conservatism, adds four "themes": that traditional Western values are needed not only to create a free and prosperous society, but also for individual fulfillment; that if traditional values and ways of living are necessary for societal and individual well-being, then many current cultural trends are deeply disturbing; that society, including government, must play an active role in supporting traditional values; and, finally, that we must take the long view, "looking back over the centuries" to find wisdom and "asking what the actions proposed for tomorrow will mean to our children, their children, and their children's children."

Lind thus attaches a few major muscle sets to the skeleton, but it's still too bony. We'll need vital organs, nerve

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cells, and skin, maybe even a little fat to fret about shedding.

Let's try a rough sketch of what this half-formed figure might finally look like. Herewith ten candidates for core tenets of cultural conservatism, each accompanied by a suggestion or two about what we might do differently if we were conducting ourselves according to these tenets. I've drawn the suggestions mainly from my own field of education, mindful that other domains would yield different examples but also aware that education isn't a bad launch pad for cultural conservatives:

1. Though many peoples, religions, and views can be found in the United States, and all are free to flourish here, as Americans we share a common culture. Its roots are in the Western civilization that began in Greece and Rome, and its ethical and moral foundations derive from the Greek and Judeo-Christian traditions. This is no static or exclusive culture, of course. It is distinguished by its ability to assimilate—and be changed and improved by—the customs, idioms, and enthusiasms of immigrants and refugees from around the world. We don't submerge our individual or group distinctions. But we are united by what we have in common, not by how we differ.

Action: Revise the curriculum of our schools, public and private alike, so that the transmission of "cultural literacy" ranks right up there with the "Three R's" among our teaching goals.

2. No individual need assent to all of the beliefs that form the heart of our common culture, many of which are religious. But in our time these beliefs do require common acknowledgment, respect, nurture, and defense. The vitality of one's culture is a key factor in the success and durability of nations and peoples. It can foster or frustrate human achievement. The world has known numerous cultures but many of these have been inimical to freedom, hostile to creativity, restrictive of the mind, blind to beauty, and deaf to initiative. Fortunate is the land whose culture opens the eyes and releases the mind, nurtures creativity and responsibility, sustains the soul in its adventures, and yet does not neglect the graces of this life. Western culture is one of the few which, at its best, does all these things. That alone would be reason to respect and defend its core beliefs. But there is a further reason: the erosion, cheapening, or self-doubt of *our* culture in today's world can only profit a ruthless totalitarian system, already installed on four continents, which is a veritable graveyard of all that we believe and cherish.

Action: Educators should stop scorning "beliefs" as if they were something to be held only in private or in church; and should quit treating beliefs based on religion as if they had no place in public discourse.

3. At the core of our culture's ideas of political and social order is a belief in the sanctity of the individual, and a corresponding commitment to the principle of individual moral responsibility. No one may invade another's rights but each of us is accountable for the consequences of his own actions.

It must be assumed that liberalism will meticulously note, publicize, and exploit every crack, tension, and family quarrel within conservatism.

That does not mean we cut off a hand for the first offense. We don't assume everyone always behaves perfectly. But we regard moral infractions as gravely as the material kind. Immoral actions, like illegal actions, deserve public scorn as well as private guilt. One of the functions of a culture—and of adults steeped in it—is to infuse the young and inexperienced with the distinctions we make between right and wrong, ethical and unethical, good and bad.

Actions: Government policy should send the right "messages" and teach the proper "lessons" to the whole society, and especially to the young, about good behavior, sound habits, and acceptable practices. Every adult, including but not limited to parents, teachers, and professors, should make moral development and character formation explicit goals for all children and the basis for purposeful "role-modeling" in all manner of institutional and informal settings.

4. Democracy is the best form of government known to man, the only safe guardian of human rights and individual liberty. But democracy will endure only so long as, and will flourish only to the degree that, its citizens are capable of informed participation in it and willing to defend it. If we do not have a satisfactory level of civic involvement, democracy will wither. If we do not have a commensurate dedication to its defense against external threat, democracy will in time be struck down.

Actions: Stop teaching that all political systems are equally legitimate, merely different. Inculcate instead in the young an understanding of why democracy is superior, how it is vulnerable, what is entailed in its defense, and why the participation of every citizen is important.

5. The foremost obligation of a democratic state is to ensure the safety and liberty of its citizens; key to fulfilling this obligation is a government limited in its powers (a rare cultural achievement) and governors constrained by the rule of law (an equally rare accomplishment). The challenge here is to achieve the proper balance between Lind's assertion that government should be a positive force in support of traditional values and the general welfare, and our devotion to individual liberty and minimum government interference. For starters, we could at least agree that such a balance is what we seek. Then we can fuss about the details, weigh the trade-offs, and admit of some necessary compromises.

Actions: Expect of parents, teachers, clergymen, the media, and public officials that the concept of limited government will be embraced as one of the fundamental values of the culture and that, within those limits, other core values will be fostered by all our major institutions *including* government.

Ensure that school curricula make plain both why government is needed and why it should be limited; how free societies also structure and regulate themselves through economic, cultural, social, religious, and familial arrangements; and what is lost when government bursts its proper boundaries and seizes control of peoples' lives.

6. The vitality of those institutions that mediate between the state and the individual—churches, the press, the neighborhood and community, voluntary associations of all sorts—is crucial for a free society and a vibrant culture. Following the principle of subsidiarity, it is preferable for communal functions to be carried out by the lowest and most decentralized levels in the structure of the common good that are capable of discharging them.

Actions: Maintain public incentives for private philanthropy and voluntaryism, policies that favor pluralism over monopoly, and decentralized provisions for the common welfare even when, in the short run, these appear less "efficient."

Allow individual schools more institutional sovereignty than is customary today, at least in public education. Encourage the professionals who work in them to distinguish one school from the next according to instructional styles and organizational arrangements. Encourage as well the provision of educational and social services by other agencies and private vendors: by tutoring clinics, after-school religion classes, scouting, YMCA's, music and dance teachers, museums and theaters, Little League and libraries. The point is not to turn every child into an overscheduled dilettante. It is to buttress the principles of decentralization, diversity, and choice in the upbringing of children in a society that also wants a "core curriculum" in its regular schools. Besides, it makes sense to allow responsibility to gravitate to places and persons capable of handling it rather than to assume that everything can be furnished by a single public institution.

7. Though the individual is the primary element of our political/governmental system, the family unit is the primary element of the social system and is ordinarily the most competent to arrange for such essentials as the nurture of children, the succor of the ill, and the well-being of the aged. The most desired (though not the only serviceable) form of family unit is a man and woman, married to each other, with children born of that marriage.

Actions: Empower parents to select the schools they favor for their children, without regard to family wealth or poverty; then hold them accountable for choosing wisely and for following through with the education of their sons and daughters.

8. Citizens reinforce their attachment to our shared culture through free association in common pursuits and through celebration of our heroes, holidays, legends, hymns, and symbols. The citizens of a free society cherish both its principles and its traditions. They study its history.

Actions: Teach all schoolchildren our history and see that they learn it. Make sure they understand *why* we observe Independence Day, Memorial Day, Martin Luther King's Birthday, Easter.

Set our colleges and universities the task of deepening and broadening all their students' knowledge of Western civilization. The eleventh grade American history course ought not be the end of it.

9. Cultural conservatism is compatible with, indeed is strengthened by, universal liberal education, with standards and opportunities for all. Such education, along with the sound habituation of youth, is what allows the enjoyment of freedom to become the pursuit of virtue. The essential normative influence in education, looming even larger than the schools, is the

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family. Parents are children's first and most important teachers.

Actions: Make sure that tomorrow's parents don't complete their own schooling today without learning what they'll need to know to start their children down the path to virtue. And see that the schools provide all children, regardless of background or socio-economic status, with a solid core of essential skills and knowledge. It is outside that core that schools should differ from one another.

10. Self-restraint is preferable to coercion, self-control to external control, voluntary adherence to police action. The capacity to set limits for oneself, to defer gratification, to curb one's impulses, is not the mark of an ascetic but a signal that one is mature, civilized, and virtuous. That doesn't mean we never revel in life's pleasures, only that we also value the pleasures of the spirit and the mind.

Actions: Firmly but fairly enforce discipline in the school and in the home, always seeking to replace external sanctions with internalized limits, punishments with incentives, compulsion with motivation. Don't surrender control (and don't surrender an inch until the school is free of violence, drugs, and harassment); instead share responsibility and authority.

Expect of our teachers and professors exemplary conduct in the moral and ethical domains, conduct that we would be proud for their students to emulate. And heed the indictment of James H. Billington, director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, against "the decline in faculty and administrators who clearly and robustly affirm personal values in ways that enable them to act as role models for the young." Billington writes:

> No one—least of all deans or chaplains—talks any more about self-discipline as everyone tries to be first in line in adjusting to and accepting the student's newfound right to do whatever he has just decided he wants. . . . With no one publicly defining a norm, universities end up producing on the whole very lonely, self-centered people—held together, if at all, more by animal ritual than by any sense of higher human community.

That's ten. Someone else might make another list, would surely phrase items differently, would likely give alternate examples. But how far can we get with *this* list? Have we the beginnings of a credo for cultural conservatism, a few ducts and arteries for its body?

There's plenty missing. I've said virtually nothing about economic policy, have alluded only indirectly to environmental matters, haven't been at all specific about foreign and defense policy (what, no SDI?), and have skirted a number of items that rank high on the "social" agenda of many conservatives. Perhaps most significantly, while I've spoken of the need to honor the important role of religion in our cultural life and to recognize that Western culture has many of its roots firmly planted in religious belief and practice, I have said nothing that would oblige a bona fide cultural conservative to believe in God, much less to participate in any particular branch of organized religion.

Heavy-duty atheists won't like cultural conservatism, but Weyrich himself writes that "the Religious Right . . . must accept the fact that some cultural conservatives may not be religious." This is important, not because of any animus against those who organize their lives around religious beliefs, but because a modern liberal democracy such as the United States cannot presuppose that everyone's life should be organized on a religious basis—no matter how much we wish to see religion respected and religious belief strong.

Is cultural conservatism too fragile, transitory, and rootless an idea to unify a movement? I think not. Furthermore, it's in the interest of our society, of our culture, not to mention our children, that we try to make it work. That we enter into splendid debates and extended conversations about its tenets until we get them right. Then unite around them. I'll wager a lot of other people will unite with us. □

Dinesh D'Souza

PAT ROBERTSON'S WORLD

In the beginning, there was Hurricane Gloria.

For some reason, Pat Robertson has become as much of an embarrassment to the Republican party as Lyndon LaRouche is to the Democrats. In fact, in some ways Robertson is the bigger bogeyman. All LaRouche does is print posters saying "Star Wars Is Safer Than Sex" and "More People Died At Chappaquiddick Than At Three Mile Island." Both arguable points of view. Robertson, by contrast, talks to God. He sees visions. He has prophecies. To Michael Kramer of *New York* magazine, the Reverend Robertson is "a wacko."

Recently Paul Kirk, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, sent out a fundraiser warning about radical extremist Christians. "Ultrafundamentalist Christians" are trying to take over the country, Kirk warns. They have "the most powerful political organization in America." Pat Robertson "wants to get more Christians involved in government," a prospect Kirk finds "alarming," "frightening," and "crazy."

This seems to go beyond theological disagreement; it borders on bigotry. The left's hostility, at least in part, comes from a sense of political frustration. In the last six years, evangelicals have been deserting the Democratic party in droves. In 1976 evangelicals flocked to Jimmy Carter from Gerald Ford, but in 1980 they went for Reagan over Carter by 56 to 34 percent. In 1984 nearly 80 percent of born-again Christians voted to re-elect the President. This group has pried open the Democratic party's grip on the South.

Pat Robertson could congratulate himself for leading a movement away from the political left and making such an impressive list of liberal foes, except that he also draws heavy criticism and alarmed looks from Republican party officials, and from the political right. Here the antagonism and fear goes largely undocumented, because everyone realizes that the evangelical vote is crucial to a Republican majority and that born-again Christians are a relatively new team of recruits, and nobody wants to scare them off. Nevertheless, those who cover the Pat Robertson presidential candidacy and frequent the GOP cocktail party circuit detect bad vibes about Brother Pat. "The party establishment is clearly uneasy about him," says Robert Shogan, a *Los Angeles Times* reporter who works the Robertson beat. Stuart Rothenberg, editor of *Political Report* at the Free Congress Foundation, maintains that GOP regulars are "frightened of Robertson."

The main reason for this Republican uneasiness is not theological. Probe GOP establishment types and at first they cite the kooky fundamentalist beliefs; but then their faces grow dark and they mutter: Abortion, School Prayer, Pornography. For years these people have professed allegiance to the New Right position on social issues; now they realize that Robertson may actually plan to do something about them.

There are also genuine concerns about Robertson's religious views and their impact on his policies. There is much snickering at the Republican National Committee over films taped by People for the American Way which show Robertson praying for the diversion of Hurricane Gloria away from his

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Christian Broadcasting Network facilities in Virginia Beach. "Storm, we command you to turn north and then go east. Your winds shall die down and you shall go harmlessly into the ocean in the name of Jesus." Actually the hurricane, which seemed directly headed for the Robertson conglomerate, did veer away at the last minute. Nevertheless Robertson's expectation that God can be called upon to intervene in natural disasters, and his Old Testament mode of prayer, are considered bizarre.

Some conservatives have expressed concern that Robertson intends to impose his theological beliefs in some way. Even though the television preachers swear by the principle of separation of church and state, is it possible for born-again Christians, whose entire worldview is shaped by theology, to make practical distinctions between the domain of Caesar and the domain of the Lord? More specifically, do they seek a "Christian Nation" which involves the imposition of Protestant orthodoxy on the rest of us?

Pat Robertson did not grow up in a fundamentalist milieu. Actually, he grew up in Brooklyn. His father was A. Willis Robertson, a U.S. senator, and there are two Presidents (the Harrisons) in his ancestral background. Robertson graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Washington and Lee University and then attended the Yale Law School. He was a Marine lieutenant in Korea, where he reached the finals of the Golden Gloves middleweight championship. After a brief stint at W.R. Grace in New York, Robertson started an electronics business. He took a break in 1956 to become Richmond county chairman for Adlai Stevenson's campaign for the presidency.

This is not, in other words, your typical Southern hick. By all the conventional criteria, Pat Robertson was making the right moves. If he continued to mingle in Democratic circles, absorb the regnant passions, hitch onto the civil rights movement, become fashionably deprecating toward his Southern background, and quote the Yale deconstructionists once in a while, he would be virtually assured of ending up like Bill Moyers, Tom Wicker, or one of the other heavyweights of the Enlightened New South.

Instead, Robertson decided to be gauche. He accepted Christ as his personal savior after a series of conversations with a Philadelphia minister, Cornelius Vanderbreggen. He enrolled in Bible school, and then convinced his wife Dede to pack up and move with him and the children to Virginia to start a church.

He was soon inculturated into the fundamentalist world of relying on faith for all earthly, as well as spiritual, needs. In his autobiography, *Shout It From the Housetops*, he recounts that fervent prayer wrought countless "little miracles" which enabled Robertson to establish himself as a successful pastor. When Robertson's son took desperately ill, for example, Robertson laid hands on him and prayed in tongues. After the prayers subsided, Robertson reports, his son's fever broke and he soon got well.

Now the methodology may seem a little bit suspect. But there are hundreds of evangelicals who will come forward to testify that when they prayed with Robertson their ailments got better. There is no doubt that the born-again churches can produce numerous former drug addicts, convicts, and homosexuals (even AIDS victims) who have converted to Christ and reformed their lives. "The only difference between me and others is that I believe that when I pray, I get answers," Robertson says.

Probe establishment GOP types and at first they cite the kooky fundamentalist beliefs; but then their faces grow dark and they mutter: Abortion, School Prayer, Pornography.

It is obvious to anyone who follows Robertson that his commitment to his faith is very strong. Yet much has been written about him implying that his motives are suspect. The general suspicion, derived from his popularity and annual revenues, is that he is in the business for the money. But this ignores the past travails of Robertson and the other TV evangelists, who started out years ago in run-down Southern circuits, when the money was awful, when ridicule was common, when countless other alternatives were available to them. Pat Robertson, well bred and well educated, could have opted for any field; instead he sold most of his possessions and migrated South with his family to start a small church. This, to me, does not reveal rapacity or opportunism.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Robertson's church blossomed into an empire. The Christian Broadcasting Network takes in $230 million a year, more than twice as much as Jerry Falwell's operation. Robertson's TV show, "The 700 Club," reaches 27 million viewers a month, according to Nielsen. In addition, Robertson heads CBN University, an accredited school whose president is a former *New York Times* man, Robert Slosser. And there are Robertson's missionary outposts abroad, which include a refugee program for Central America.

There are two reasons that evangelical groups like Pat Robertson's grew so fast. The first is their concentrated dedication and proselytization, which have historical roots. Ever since the Scopes trial, fundamentalists have tended to withdraw from the world's institutions, regarding them as corrupted by Darwinism, materialism, and hedonism. They decided to create their own world to compete with the secular world. With tremendous resolve, they built their own schools, their own gymnasiums, their own auditoriums, their own churches. To walk around Pat Robertson's or Jerry Falwell's community is to enter a new world, a strange world, but not a Twilight Zone: it bustles with life, and is driven by an energy unfamiliar to most from the outside. Pat Robertson, when he moved to Virginia, quickly learned the rules that make such communities grow and prosper.

The second reason is the failure of the mainline Protestant denominations and the Catholic Church to meet the spiritual needs of their people. The great irony of the 1970s is that the Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Unitarian churches, which labored so hard to become "relevant" to modern needs, lost members in the hundreds of thousands. Where did all these people go? They didn't start reading T.S. Eliot, contributing to the Ethics and Public Policy Center, and lamenting the absence of absolutes in the public square. Their deep religious sentiments, it turned out, were satisfied neither by liberal theology nor by high church conservatism. So most of them joined the "dogmatic," "inflexible," "antiquated" evangelical groups of Jerry Falwell and Jimmy Swaggart and Jim Bakker and Pat Robertson, where the rules could get pretty silly, but where the spirit was still free.

After five decades of virtual isolation, fundamentalists returned to the political arena not because they wanted to cross the wall separating church and state. Rather, they sensed the state scaling the wall and mounting an assault on their lives. "We have been activated because we perceive continuous attacks by government agencies and by the courts against our deeply held beliefs," Pat Robertson says. Of course evangelicals and fundamentalists realized very soon that they could not alter the social rules by which they were treated without altering them for everybody. But in almost all cases, what they sought and continue to seek is the opportunity for their own communities to pass laws under which they choose to live. They don't want prayer for everybody's school, just for their schools. They don't care if New York allows sodomy; they just don't want it in Mississippi.

The problem for fundamentalists is the leveling impulse of liberalism, which refuses to allow divisive social issues to be resolved at the local level. It is the problem Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, and the other preachers face. They have not found a coherent way to

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respond to it. Falwell, for instance, began with Moral Majority, a narrowly focused moral issue crusade, and has now re-christened his group the Liberty Federation, which implies a wider range of concerns, but also an entirely different rhetorical approach. Robertson seems to have gone from low-key television evangelism to the sense that he needs a national podium to persuade Americans (not just evangelicals) that moral regeneration is the key to solving foreign and domestic problems.

"Ultimately the social issues are going to depend on the willingness of people themselves to live according to Judeo-Christian morality," Robertson says. "The presidency should be a bully pulpit. Ronald Reagan's successor should call the people to a sense of moral worth, to a return to the traditional family values, the dignity of life, and other things that we have held dear for so many years."

There is no evidence that Robertson wants federal bans on abortion and pornography; he has said repeatedly that he intends to let states and local communities resolve these questions for themselves. Fears that Robertson covertly seeks nationwide moral legislation, perhaps even imposition of his evangelical theology at the federal level, can be traced directly to the strident rhetoric that evangelicals once used. Indeed it is true that the early Moral Majority fundraisers called for a "Christian nation." Robertson once referred to liberal forces in America as "primarily termites. They are into destroying institutions built by Christians." And in a letter to Norman Lear, Robertson warned him to lay off: "You are not merely trying to silence a member of the press; you are trying to silence a prophet of God."

But evangelicals have learned from their tenure in political participation. "Politics is the art of the possible," Robertson now says. Falwell knows this too—witness his alliance of convenience with George Bush. David West, a professor of journalism at CBN University and Robertson's press secretary, says, "Evangelicals have learned that, in politics, you have to make coalitions with people you disagree with. And you can't get everything you want. So you have to be patient. We know this now. And we are getting more sophisticated in the art of politics."

Obviously the new inclusive rhetoric of the fundamentalists can be interpreted as a clever ploy to allay public suspicions until they get into power, after which it's time to stop the clichés and lock up the homosexuals and the Roman Catholics. But those who have worked closely with the evangelicals, such as Catholic activist Paul Weyrich, say it is remarkable how well the old fundamentalist firebrands have learned a sense of practical compromise as well as teamwork.

Falwell, for instance, changed his position to allow rape and incest exceptions in abortion legislation, not because he views this as desirable, but because he knows what is politically realistic; also—through his "Save a Baby" ministry which cares for unwed mothers—he is personally aware of the anguish and desperation that forced pregnancy brings. Robertson was once preoccupied with a handful of social issues, but through his anchor's job on "The 700 Club" he has developed an active interest in foreign and domestic policy questions; not only has this diversified his agenda, but it has given him a new flexibility. He knows that moral legislation can only work if there is a pre-existing moral consensus; he knows that this consensus has been eroded in many parts of America and only remains in certain communities; that is why he stresses that he is for the right of localities to set rules for themselves. It's the moral component to Reagan's New Federalism.

"If all the evangelicals do is talk about prayer and abortion, without question we will become a very narrow special interest group," Robertson says. "But if we talk about moral renewal, and apply it across the board, then we are talking about the problems that concern most Americans."

Robertson took a break in 1956 to become Richmond county chairman for Adlai Stevenson's campaign for the presidency.

Certainly Robertson's attempt to define all conventional political issues in moral terms makes for an interesting perspective. The deficit, he says, reflects "public demand for instant gratification and the unwillingness of many to deny themselves any presumed good." He says we have "an attitude of hedonism which passes the bills on to our children."

On trade with the Soviet bloc, Robertson faults "an immoral campaign by the banking community to fund governments which brutally repress their own people. It's hypocritical to support these governments, and it's wrong." On the United Nations, he criticizes "the excessive salaries of U.N. personnel, which exceed those of public servants everywhere in the world." He points out that high-living diplomats often come from desperately poor countries. "The lifestyle of these people is absolutely disgraceful," he says.

But there is a pragmatic side to Robertson as well. He favors "low-level technology transfers" to China because "in turn we can gain the kind of concessions which would enable us to take in Western thought, especially religious thought. There is a possibility of a revolution of ideas that the Communist leaders could not suppress." And what about the USSR? "Where the concepts of freedom are allowed to enter, by all means let us use those open doors. Such doors do not exist in the Soviet Union."

There is also a streak of wild populism. "The Federal Reserve Board must be brought under the control of the elected officials of this country." The cost of supporting criminals in jail is linked to the cost of a Harvard degree: "I don't think we should give the murderer or the rapist the economic equivalent of a Harvard education for the rest of his life."

Robertson's views include a protectionist element. In an August 1985 interview with *Conservative Digest* he said we need "free trade but fair trade," which of course means no free trade. For a touch of the bizarre, consult Robertson on the U.S. Department of Education, which he feels is "unconstitutional as an establishment of religion." What? During the time of the framers, Robertson explains, "it was considered that the education of children was a religious matter."

Recently Robertson shocked the *Washington Post* when, in an interview, he remarked that "a Supreme Court ruling is not the law" and that if he became President he would take court rulings as advisory, not binding. Public officials "are bound to support the Constitution as they see it," Robertson said. He added that the framers did not intend to give the Supreme Court final authority over the Constitution. This may be sound history, but it bucks a legal tradition going back to 1803 when Justice Marshall established judicial review.

Otherwise Robertson's views are basically the same as those of President Reagan, with added punch in some cases. He is an enthusiastic backer of strategic defense. He favors a flat tax. He thinks we should move to a system in which Social Security contributions are voluntary. He wants to fund the contras and has suggested the possibility of a U.S.-recognized government-in-exile. He has taken up the Reagan Doctrine, and called for overt funding of Jonas Savimbi's anti-Communist rebels in Angola and the Renamo freedom forces in Mozambique.

There seem to be two main problems with a Robertson candidacy that should concern even those sympathetic to what he stands for. The first is that, in his quest for electoral approval, his theological certitude will be compromised.

When fundamentalists first entered politics, they brought to it an unadulterated moral fervor. Falwell addressed issues in a way that showed he didn't much care about public opinion. "Don't talk to me about popularity," Falwell once sneered. "Christ was crucified—that's how he ended his career." But today it is different. Falwell himself has mellowed to the point where he is comfortable with the Reagan-Bush approach of giving only rhetorical subservience to the moral agenda.

Similarly Robertson has stopped talking about prophecies. He doesn't speak in tongues. He has let up on the public healings. In fact, in interviews he has sounded defensive and concessionary about his faith. Howard Phillips of the Conservative Caucus remarks that, of late, Robertson seems to be emphasizing his business acumen over his religious and moral faith. "He is reluctant to speak in areas that relate to his religious vocation lest this rouse fears of an improper Christian involvement in politics."

The other problem works in the opposite direction. It concerns the effect an important aspect of Robertson's religion will have on the political office he seeks. "I belong to the Lord," Robertson told *Conservative Digest*. "And if the Lord told me to do something, I'd do it, whatever it was."

How can one reconcile his methodology with the duties of a President in a popular democracy? Will the people's concerns be subordinated to whispers from above? Will presidential aides be driven to hiding in the White House bedroom and, when Robertson sleeps, recommend their favored courses of action in deep, authoritative tones? Obviously there is nothing wrong with praying to God for wisdom to make the right decisions. But to wait for visions and sounds from heaven is to discount the reasoning power of the President, the wise counsel of his cabinet, and the opinions of the people who put them in power. Press secretary West argues that divine epiphany is very rare and moreover it is "confirmed" by the dictates of reason and sound advice. Still, there is an anti-democratic tinge to Robertson's modus operandi which is bound to become an issue as 1988 draws nearer.

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What differences will a Robertson candidacy make? Right now Robertson backers, operating through a group called the Freedom Council, are frantically organizing in Oklahoma, Wyoming, Minnesota, Florida, and elsewhere. The enthusiasm is immense. And these are not all Southern fundamentalists: for instance, the Michigan state chairman of the Freedom Council is Marlene Elwell, a Catholic Democrat and mother of five who works for the right-to-life movement. She was a field director for Reagan's re-election in 1984. Very familiar with Robertson and his people, she is not at all uncomfortable about working for him. She sees his candidacy as "putting together people who work for traditional values, setting aside theological differences."

In Nebraska, Robertson backers have swept control of Republican county conventions in Douglas County (which contains Omaha) and Lancaster County (which contains Lincoln). In Michigan Robertson claims to have fielded the second largest number of candidates for control of the GOP conventions—more than Jack Kemp—although that's only in the first round of voting. New Hampshire's former governor, Meldrim Thompson, has recently come out for Robertson, maintaining that he has the best chance to win the New Hampshire primary. Certainly Robertson embodies values that would appeal to the fiercely independent and anti-establishment farmers and townspeople there.

The unmitigated virtue of the Robertson candidacy is that it imports into the political process voters who never participated before. The boon for Republicans is that "he stimulates two groups," as researcher Bill Greener of the RNC puts it, "non-participants and Democrats." Moreover, his new Republican recruits will work tirelessly for the cause. They are, as Greener puts it, "a new, identifiable, homogenous and active constituency that can be easily mobilized."

Who knows if Robertson will siphon off right-wing support from Kemp? Or whether by embarrassing Bush in the early running he will clear the field for other candidates. Or whether he will become a powerful broker at the Republican convention. It is possible (though unlikely) that he will be a vice presidential nominee; being from the South, he could be a regional complement to either Bush or Kemp. It is conceivable that Robertson's candidacy is merely aimed at forcing the moral agenda into the political debate, and once Kemp and Bush have outdone themselves in making commitments on these issues, Robertson will drop out with a smile. But whatever his purpose, "a lot of people are fearful of Robertson," says Ed Rollins, Reagan's 1984 campaign manager. And as a Bush aide warned in a memo to the Vice President, "We've got Air Force Two but remember, to many of these people, Pat Robertson has God." □

P. J. O'Rourke

CRIMSON CEREBRATIONS

A Harvard yawn party.

I always envied the fellows who went to Harvard. Wouldn't it be swell to be on the Crimson gravy train? I'd probably be a government big shot by now, undermining U.S. foreign policy, or a CEO running some industry into the ground. I'd have that wonderful accent as if I'd put the Fix-A-Dent on the wrong side of my partial plate. And I'd have lots of high-brow Ivy League friends. We could have drinks at the Harvard Club and show off our Ivy League ability to get loud on one gin fizz. There, but for low high school grades, middling SAT scores, horrible disciplinary record, and parents with less than $100 in the bank, go I. How sad.

Or so I thought. I'm cured now. I just came back from Harvard's monster gala 350th Anniversary Celebration, and thank you, God, for making me born dumb. I went to a state college in Ohio. Therefore I will never have to listen to dozens of puff buckets jaw for hours about how my alma mater is the first cause, mother lode, and prime mover of all deep thought in the USA. I'm not saying the puff buckets are wrong. Harvard *is* the home of American ideas; there have been several of these and somebody has to take the blame for them. But it ain't the likes of me. Us yokels who majored in beer and getting the skirts off Tri-Delts bear no responsibility for Thoreau's hippie jive or John Kenneth Galbraith's nitwit economics or Henry Kissinger's brown-nosing the Shah of Iran. None of us served as models for characters in that sleazy *Love Story* book. Our best and brightest stick to running insurance agencies and don't go around cozening the nation into Vietnam wars. It wasn't my school that laid the educational groundwork for FDR's demagoguery or JFK's Bay of Pigs slough-off or even Teddy Roosevelt's fool decision to split the Republican party and let that buttinski Wilson get elected. You can't pin the rap on us.

But I was still full of high, if slightly green-eyed, expectations when I arrived at Harvard on Wednesday, September 3rd. I was just in time for something the Official Program called "Harvard's Floating Birthday Party," though it took place on a patch of muddy grass between Memorial Drive and the Charles River and didn't float at all. According to the Program notes, there was to be "a 600-foot illuminated rainbow, laser projections . . . appearances by the Cambridge Harmonica Orchestra . . . The Yale Russian Chorus, the clown Mme. Nose; the one-man riddle and rhyme show, 'Electric Poetry,' " and other sophisticated delights.

The laser projections looked like Brownie Scouts at play with flashlights and colored cellophane. The illuminated rainbow looked like a McDonald's trademark. "Electric Poetry" turned out to be one of those two-bit Radio Shack things where you can program messages to crawl along rows of

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little light bulbs. It flashed such verses as, "Be your best/Pass this test/Divest/Your funds from South Africa." I searched in vain for the clown Mme. Nose.

The Yale Russian Chorus, however, was performing or maybe that was the Cambridge Harmonica Orchestra or perhaps the Oxford Nose Harp Ensemble. I listened but I couldn't be sure. It was raining but this did not deter the spectators who arrived by the hundreds to stand lax-jawed in bovine clusters, occasionally fingering their alumni badges. Here was America's power elite, all wet with no idea what they were doing. You can take it for a symbol if you like. I couldn't take it at all and went to the nearest bar.

There was a modern dance performance that night called "Gym Transit"—part of Radcliffe College's contribution to the 350th festivities. The Program notes described it as "celebrating the art of sport and dance." I admire phrases like this with a whole bunch of concepts which, if you have a Harvard education, you can just jumble together any old way. I'll bet "Gym Transit" could also be described as "dancing the celebration of art and sport" or "sporting the dance of celebrating art" or "making an art of sport dance celebration." It was hard to pass this up, but after six drinks I managed.

The next morning was the great Foundation Day Convocation which President Reagan wasn't addressing. You may remember the press flap. Harvard wanted the President to give a 350th birthday speech just as Franklin Roosevelt had at the 300th and Grover Cleveland at the 250th. But Harvard didn't want to give the President an honorary degree. I guess they felt Reagan was a nice man and, no doubt, important in his way, but not quite Harvard material. Once again they're right. Ron would have dozed off during "Gym Transit" even quicker than me. So the President, God bless him, told Harvard to piss up a rope. And Harvard had to go shopping for someone else. I'm sure they were looking for a person who embodied democratic spirit, intellectual excellence, and the American ethos, which is why they picked Prince Charles.

Harvard didn't want to give the President an honorary degree. I guess they felt Reagan was a nice man and, no doubt, important in his way, but not quite Harvard material.

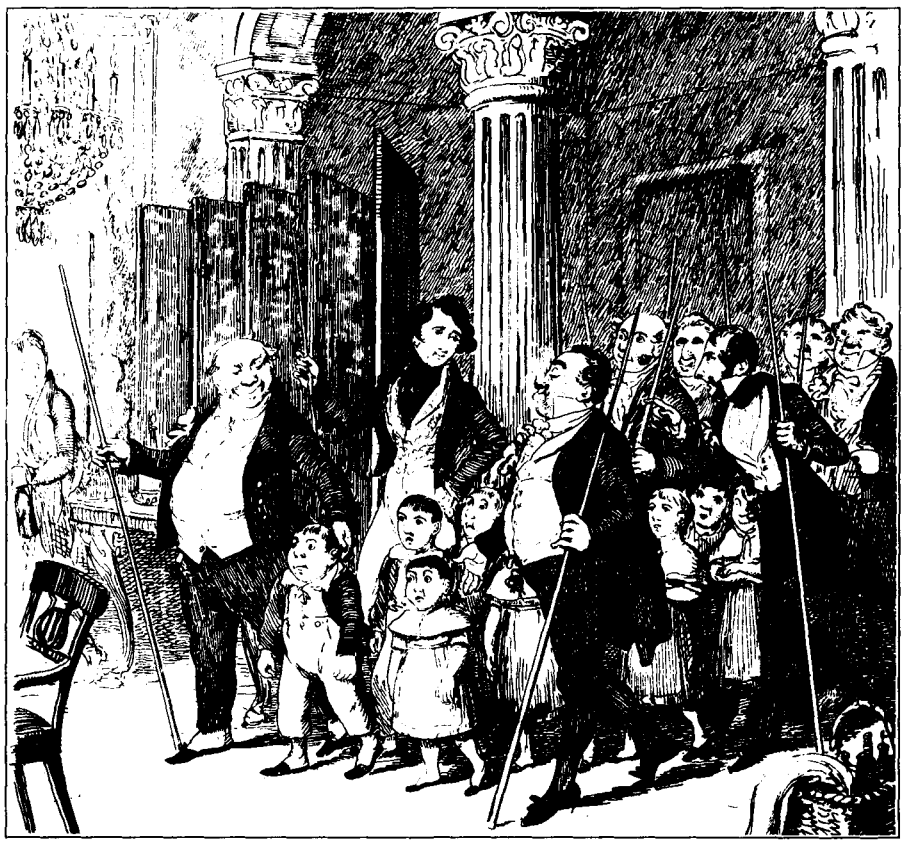
The Convocation opened with prayers by Chaplain of the Day Rabbi Ben-Zion Gold, director of the campus B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation. Rabbi Gold graduated from Roosevelt University in Chicago, sounded like Shecky Greene, and running him first out of the gate seemed a kind of cruel joke. The Ivy League has never been famously hospitable to Jews. And Harvard has been almost as important to the American Jewish community as the pork sausage industry. There followed eleven speakers and three anthems sung mostly in foreign languages. The temptation to rattle on at length was resisted by no one. I whiled away the time in the half-empty press section defending myself from a horde of yellow jackets that had descended on Harvard Yard and by deciding which member of the Radcliffe Choral Society I would take with me to a desert island if I had to take one of them, and fortunately I do not. The Choral Society looked like the Harvard football team with mops on their heads.

Every now and then I'd catch some fragment of a speech. I remember the adenoidal-voiced Professor of Classical Greek, Emily D.T. Vermeule, dumping on Homer. She quoted the *Odyssey* where Homer had the minstrel Phemius, begging Odysseus to spare his life, say, "I am self-taught. God planted all the paths of poetry in my mind."

Professor Vermeule took a dim view of this. "He spoke in pride," she said, "that only god was his tutor; in vanity, for his original genius; in fear, that death might take his irreplaceable gift of words. He was wrong. . . . Harvard," Professor Vermeule said, " . . . is not self-taught, and is rightly proud of that." Poor Homer, you see, probably couldn't even get into Yale.

By the time Prince Chuck got to the podium the show was running almost an hour behind schedule. "The suspense of this momentous occasion has been killing me," said the Prince. "It's exquisite torture for the uninitiated. Fortunately all my character-building education has prepared me for this." Charles seemed as confused as I was about what he was doing there. "I thought that in Massachusetts they weren't too certain about the supposed benefits of royalty," he said, and noted that he hadn't "addressed such a large gathering since I spoke to 40,000 Gujerato buffalo farmers in India in 1980 . . ."

The rest of the speech was a sweet little well-pronounced thing about development of character being more important in education than mastery of technology. The audience clapped at odd moments and it was a while before I figured out they were applauding anything that could be construed as a warning against atomic energy and bombs and stuff.



The 350th Anniversary celebration went on for four days and included a mind-numbing and butt-wearying number of events. There were two other convocations, 83 academic symposia, 43 exhibitions, and 16 performing arts events plus heaps and piles of private lunches, cocktail parties, dinners, and receptions. The symposia ranged from over-reach ("The Universe: The Beginning, Now and Henceforth") to under-reach ("Films as an Art Form") and included the dumb ("Feminist Criticism and the Study of Literature: What Difference Does Difference Make?"), the very dumb ("Taking Charge of Your Life"), and the hopelessly oxymoronic ("The Role and Social Value of the Large Law Firm"). One symposium was called "Beyond Deterrence: Avoiding Nuclear War" and billed itself as "An examination of the use of nuclear weapons." For doorstops? Another was titled "Homer at Harvard," so maybe they're claiming the old hexameter basher as one of their own, after all.

The list of exhibits looked worse yet, for instance, "Artifacts of Education" at the Gutman Library, which I assume was old pen nibs and gum under seats. I only actually saw one exhibit, a massive display on "A New Approach to the Treatment of Advanced Periodontal Disease," complete with color photographs that I had to walk by to get to the free press lunch.

I felt I should go to at least one symposium, too. I picked "The International Negotiation Process: Can We Improve It?" figuring this was as likely a place as any for eggheads to go wrong. But in its ability to disappoint, as in all other fields, Harvard excels. The eggheads didn't go wrong. They didn't go anywhere. They yammered for two hours about U.S.–Soviet treaty bargaining, saying nothing about negotiation I couldn't have learned from a Kansas City divorce lawyer.

The moderator, Professor of Law Emeritus Louis Sohn, had an accent so thick I could understand almost nothing he said. The gist of that almost nothing was that there are three kinds of negotiation: one-on-one, mediation by a third party, and submission of dispute to an international tribunal. Professor Sohn said one of these doesn't work very well with the Soviets and the other two don't work at all.

The first panelist, Arthur Hartman, U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, pointed out that Russians are very Russian. He also pointed out that Communism is totalitarian and we can't count on *Pravda* investigative reporters to catch the Soviets cheating on arms agreements. And he railed briefly against the congressional tendency to legislate the negotiating process instead of letting the executive branch screw things up on its own.

The second panelist was former Attorney General Elliot Richardson. Richardson is one of those fixtures on the political scene that nobody knows quite what to do with. A job negotiating the International Law of the Sea treaty was fobbed off on him a few

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years back. It must have made a big impression. Richardson brought the discussion around to sea law at every opportunity. Among his many insights (each illustrated with a law-of-the-sea example): the Soviets act in their own self-interest; the Soviets get peeved when reminded that they're not really a superpower but a sort of overgrown Bulgaria; and, "If we are to succeed in negotiating we must understand their position . . . and we'd better understand our position, too."

The third panelist was Howard Raiffa, a professor at the Harvard Business School and an expert on decision analysis and negotiation. He said a number of things, or I assume he did. I had temporarily dozed off.

Batting clean-up was Roger Fisher, another Harvard Law School prof and author of the best-selling *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreements Without Giving In.* Professor Fisher was cute and glib and quotable, saying things like, "Asking who's winning a negotiation is like asking who's winning a marriage," and, "When it comes to arms negotiations, we can be equally insecure for less money." Fisher could probably get a job in the real world if he tried.

A question-and-answer period followed. I asked myself the question, "What am I doing here?" and left.

That night I went to Boston and got hammered and missed the only interesting thing that happened during the anniversary. A weedy group of 60 or 80 anti-apartheid protesters had been popping up here and there all through the ceremonies, squeaking "Divest Now," and waving placards saying, "There's blood on your portfolio." Being a veteran of the pressing issues and real riots of the 1960s, I had paid them no mind. But on Thursday night the do-gooders nerved themselves and blocked the entrances to the 350th Anniversary Dinner, a $20,000 black tie fete for several hundred of the University's most influential alumni. There was a good deal of shouting and even some pushing and wrassling between alumni and protesters. According to the *Harvard Crimson*, "Hugh Calkins '45 . . . led a small contingent of alumni who tried to make their way through the blockade in front of one door. The activists physically repelled them. . . . At another entrance . . .an alumnus successfully climbed through several rows of arm-linked protesters who attempted to push him down the steps. As he physically struggled against the activists, the alumnus called them 'assholes' . . ."

Mercifully for the protesters, this wasn't Georgia Tech. Cambridge police officers reportedly said they were ready to arrest the protesters and only had "to be given the word." The president of Harvard, Derek C. Bok, canceled the dinner instead. I was unable to determine the whereabouts, during these events, of Professor Fisher and his *Negotiating Agreements Without Giving In.*

On Friday morning Secretary of State George Shultz addressed the second convocation. This was almost as long and involved as the Prince Jug Ears get-together, and the security arrangements verged on the maniacal. A UPI reporter told me he'd counted fourteen different law enforcement agencies so far. While we sat in Harvard Yard nearly a dozen Secret Service agents roamed the aisles staring intently at us. Outside, the protesters were back but this time double-teamed by cops. They carried signs protesting not only apartheid but also aid to Israel, involvement in El Salvador, and aggression against Nicaragua and Cuba. One sign said, "Remember John Reed," the pro-Lenin U.S. reporter (and Harvard grad) buried in the Kremlin wall. Inside, a few protesters had scattered themselves through the audience. About every five minutes one would bob to his feet and yell. Then police and Secret Service agents would come and stand in front of him and glower until he sat down.

Just as the convocation got underway, a low-flying plane began to circle the Yard dragging a banner with the message, "US/HARVARD OUT OF SOUTH AFRICA SANCTIONS DIVEST NOW." This drowned out the Call to Order and a long-winded prayer by the Chaplain of the Day (a Mick, this time), and part of an address by the mayor of Cambridge—so disrespect for freedom of speech has its rewards. Governor Dukakis spoke next and did some Kennedy quoting. He was followed by Tip O'Neill, who seems determined to break Sarah Bernhardt's record for farewell appearances. It's not often that I have any fellow-feeling for the Buddha of Bureaucracy, but I must hand it to Mr. Speaker; he began by saying he remembered Harvard Yard very well—at fourteen he cut the lawns here. And he went on to point out that when he was first starting in politics and Harvard was celebrating its 300th Anniversary, only 3 percent of high school graduates got a chance at college, leaving it unsaid how it's no thanks to Harvard that more do today. The rest of Tip's speech was, of course, blathersgate, and was followed by a bland student oration and a bad poem by Seamus Heaney, Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory.

Finally they got around to George Shultz. "This magnificent institution stands for a great tradition of intellectual openness, free inquiry, and pursuit of truth," Shultz said while protesters in the audience tried to drown him out. He talked about the advantages free nations have over Communist societies in the "Information Revolution." "How can a system that keeps photocopiers and mimeograph machines under strict control exploit the benefits of the VCR and the personal computer?" Shultz asked the unresponsive audience.

Among Elliot Richardson's many insights: the Soviets get peeved when reminded that they're not really a superpower but a sort of overgrown Bulgaria.

Shultz proposed that freedom is a revolutionary force, and there were mixed noises when he mentioned resistance groups in Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, and Nicaragua. "In South Africa, the structure of apartheid is under siege as never before," he said.

"Not by you," screamed someone in the crowd, and there was scattered applause.

"Today the validity of the idea of democracy is the most important political reality of our time," said Shultz and received some yells of dissent. Shultz spoke cogently against government central planning—no response. Shultz argued persuasively that "America's weakness makes the world a more dangerous place"—no response. Some conservative listeners bestirred themselves at the mention of the Libyan airstrike. Others booed. " . . . a better future is likely to take shape if, and perhaps only if America is there to help shape it," said Shultz—no response.

Shultz made an attack on the neo-isolationism that has formed the basis for liberal foreign policy since the early seventies. He condemned "the illusion that we can promote justice by aloof self-righteousness, that we can promote peace by merely wishing for it." There was no response to that, either. He damned economic protectionism and got some handclaps until he said, "Another form of escapism is self-righteous moralism," and the booing began again. Then Shultz went into the debate about congressional cuts in the foreign affairs budget, but this seemed too deep for the audience and they quit booing or clapping and started riffling through the program notes trying to figure out where lunch was.

"Those who built a college at the edge of a boundless forest were not fearful, timid people," said Shultz at the end of his speech. "They did not shirk their responsibilities. They were practical men and women. They were earthy and realistic. . . . Let us honor that tradition." Maybe George was mixed up. Maybe he thought this was the 350th Anniversary of Michigan State. □

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Rael Jean Isaac

LEGAL SERVICES AND THE FARMER

A real scandal of the Reagan years.

As farmers in the United States struggle to stay afloat, billions are poured into programs intended to alleviate their plight. But one government program, ironically bruited as a champion of the poor, proceeds in systematic fashion to drain farmers economically, even driving some out of business. The Legal Services Corporation (LSC), created by Congress in 1974 to aid the poor in civil cases, and funded by Congress to the tune of $305 million for fiscal 1987, is in practice a haven for radical lawyers who see the 320 local programs and twenty-odd "national support centers" (which act as think tanks for the system) as a vehicle for applying social jujitsu. Although the Reagan-appointed national board and the staff of the LSC in Washington, D.C. have tried to curb abuses by the local programs, their efforts have been fruitless. The farmer who employs migrant or seasonal labor has emerged as a special, and peculiarly vulnerable, target.

This is how it typically works. A farmer receives a "demand" letter from his local Legal Services program informing him that the program has been retained by two farmworkers (unnamed). He is told that he is in violation of seven or eight provisions of the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Protection Act and must pay $500 for each violation. Thus, for example, eight violations for two workers will come to $8,000.

The "violations" listed are almost always the same: failure to provide workers with a written disclosure of the terms and conditions of the occupancy of housing provided them, failure to obtain and post a certificate of compliance from the appropriate federal or state agency before the housing was occupied, failure to comply with federal and state safety and health requirements, failure to maintain pay records indicating all the information required by federal law, and so on. Some of these violations are of a technical nature (failure to post a sign) but even when they sound substantive (failure to comply with safety and health requirements) the violation could be nothing more than a torn screen. The farmer has no way of knowing from these general allegations whose rights he is accused of violating in what way.

The letter closes with a "promise" and a "threat." The promise is that the Legal Services office, in the words of the form letter, "has resolved claims such as this through payments of a reasonable small settlement." The threat, as the letter puts it, is "the expense of federal litigation." The letter concludes: "If I do not hear from you within ten (10) days of receipt of this letter, I will assume that you do not desire to attempt to resolve this matter without litigation."

The reaction of Elasta Smith of Newton Grove, North Carolina to the first "demand" letter was typical of many farmers: "I paid it no mind." Two weeks later he received another letter from the local Legal Services grantee, saying it now represented four additional (still unnamed) farmworkers. Robert Griffith, an attorney who has represented a number of farmers who have received such letters from Farmworkers Legal Services of North Carolina, reports that this is its standard modus operandi. Griffith observes: "A lack of response or a request for more information will result in a second letter informing the farmer that more clients have contacted the Legal Services office and the demand has been doubled." (In Smith's case, the second letter quadrupled the amount demanded, to $32,000.)

Smith now took the matter seriously and went to a lawyer. He discovered, like innumerable others, that short of going to federal court he had no way of finding out who was accusing him of what. He had two choices: pay up, for as small a sum as the lawyer could negotiate, or be taken to federal court, in which case, win or lose, he would lose, because his costs would be greater than if he had settled.[1] Elasta Smith was tenacious and this worked to his advantage. He refused the initial offer his attorney negotiated with Legal Services ("It proved to me I wasn't guilty of anything they'd charged me with," Mr. Smith explained to me). But he accepted the second, and wound up out of pocket "only" $4,000. For Smith's marginal truck farming operation, even this "bargain sum" was the last straw. He sold out last year at the age of 68.

Farmers become demoralized because they never know when they will be hit with the next "demand letter," their modern version of the sword of Damocles. Julius Parker, also of Newton Grove, received repeated letters starting in 1982. He says he paid $500, then $800, then $1,000. Finally he got a demand letter for $30,000. Legal Services settled for $500 when Parker threatened to go into bankruptcy, which he was forced in the end to do.

Too much tenacity is fatal. Like Elasta Smith a farmer for over forty years, Ayden Barefoot, also of North Carolina, received a demand letter, in his case for $12,000. Barefoot refused to pay up. Hauled into federal court, he was forced to deal with a mountain of paperwork in the form of interrogatories and depositions. Barefoot says: "They found out everything about

Rael Jean Isaac's latest book (with Erich Isaac) is The Coercive Utopians *(Regnery Gateway). In her most recent articles for* The American Spectator, *Mrs. Isaac has covered the Government Accountability Project and the Sanctuary movement.*

[1]Attorney James Levinson says lawyers routinely advise farmers to settle because there will be a minimum of $10,000 in costs if the case gets to federal court.

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me. If I had all the papers I had to sign it would be at least three-and-a-half feet high." (While Barefoot kept no tally, a farmer in Florida kept one in his own case, and found that 120,000 documents were demanded of him during discovery procedures.) Reluctantly, at the insistence of his wife who could no longer take the pressures of the case, Barefoot settled in the course of the trial. He observes: "I served in World War II. This was more hell than the war and I was wounded twice." (Barefoot reports discovering in the course of the trial that two of the four bringing suit through Legal Services had worked for him, between them, a total of seven hours.) The case cost him close to $20,000, 80 percent of it in the form of legal fees assessed by Legal Services and his own attorney.

Hard-hit though they are, North Carolina farmers are by no means the only victims. The farmers of Michigan, Florida, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Maine, California, Arizona, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, and Texas have also been targeted. In Hereford, Texas, an agricultural community of 16,000 known as the "salad bowl" of the Texas panhandle, the impact of Legal Services was so devastating that 3,000 residents signed a petition to the Legal Services Corporation headquarters in Washington calling for "an end to the political activism, racism, fear, violence and economic destruction being promoted in our midst with our own tax dollars."

In December 1985 the mayor of Hereford, Wesley Fisher, testified before the national board of the Legal Services Corporation that the people of the town "feel that they are virtually being held hostage by the Texas Rural Legal Aid." Fisher estimated that $4 million and 400 jobs had been lost to the community as a result of Legal Services activities. A former Texas state representative from Pecos testified that in the Presidio-Redford farming area, on the Mexican border, the number of farmers had dropped from twenty-nine to sixteen in the last few years. A major factor was the hundreds of thousands in legal fees in suits brought by Texas Rural Legal Aid. (Ironically, although many Legal Services attorneys see themselves as the champion of Mexicans as against "Anglos," many of the targeted farmers in Texas have been Mexican-Americans.)

If there is one group of farmers that has been singled out by Legal Services, it is those who participate in the H2 program, which Legal Services views as a safety valve for farmers who would otherwise have to pay higher wages to attract domestic workers. The purpose of the H2 program is to bring in temporary foreign workers, chiefly from Jamaica and Mexico, to harvest crops when sufficient domestic workers are not available. Under the program farmers must first try to recruit domestic workers through the Labor Department's national job service system and then receive certification from the department that sufficient domestic workers are not available. Without this certification they cannot bring in H2 workers. Thus, for the grower who must have workers at the harvesting season, losing that certification is tantamount to bankruptcy. As a result of the elaborate regulation surrounding the program, farmers who participate are, in the words of Tom Wilson, an attorney who has represented many H2 farmers, "the clean jeans" of the farming business.

Although the Reagan-appointed national board and the staff of Legal Services Corporation have tried to curb abuses in the program, their efforts have been fruitless.

Nonetheless, farmers in this program along the eastern seaboard have been the subject of what one attorney calls "an unparalleled administrative and judicial assault." For example, six orchard-owners in western Maryland found themselves the target of 175 administrative complaints and fifteen federal lawsuits, involving the same people and issues, within a two-year period beginning in 1983. To a large extent the suits were directed at changing the H2 law. One suit accused the growers of failing to provide family housing, even though the Department of Labor had ruled that they need only provide individual housing. (It turned out that of the eleven workers on whose behalf the Maryland Legal Services program brought suit against two orchards, only one was married.) If Legal Services wanted to change the rules, it could petition the Department of Labor to do so. Instead, it brought suit against the farmers to decertify them from the job service system.

In the summer of 1986 Terry Hepburn, one of the six western Maryland growers, was decertified on the grounds that a ladder test he had always given new employees discriminated against domestic workers. The test required a worker to show he could move and climb the 24-foot ladder used in apple harvesting. Hepburn says he viewed the test as a protection for his workers: "I think it's important a guy working knows the guy next to him isn't going to kill him with a ladder." No one claimed the test was administered unfairly, and the Department of Labor had approved the test (its representatives in fact were present to witness its administration to domestic and foreign workers alike in 1984 and 1985). But Legal Services claimed that the fact that domestic workers did not do as well made it discriminatory. Hepburn was decertified as the result of an administrative suit. At the same time, he was being sued on this same ladder test in federal court, with Legal Services demanding damages in the form of all the wages workers who failed the ladder test would have earned had they worked the full season.

Hepburn, whose business cannot sustain hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees, is more amazed than angry at what has happened to him. "If someone told me fourteen years ago when I became general manager of this orchard that I'd be in federal court three times in one year, I'd probably laugh. But it's not a joke. It's very disheartening. If I could get out of agriculture at this point, I probably would."

The point of all these cases, what Terry Hepburn calls "legalized terrorism," has nothing to do with housing or ladders or even the welfare of workers. In 1986 Hepburn stopped giving the ladder test to peach harvesters. On August 11, one of the workers fell off a 12-foot ladder and was hospitalized with a serious head injury. And Hepburn has eliminated the small end-of-season bonus he formerly offered workers. (Legal Services sued in federal court on behalf of workers who had *not* completed the season, arguing that they should be entitled to the bonus because they had worked most of the season.) The practical effect of the suit was to reduce worker income. But the purpose of such cases is to destroy the H2 program by making it clear to any farmer who uses it that he will be bankrupted by lawsuits.

Occasionally a Legal Services attorney is frank about this goal. Thus in 1980 Robert Williams, an attorney with Florida Rural Legal Services, gave a newspaper interview in which he announced the H2 program was "incapable of reform," constituted "a form of indentured servitude," and threatened the jobs of American workers. (In fact, to preclude the possibility that foreign workers will drive down the wage of the domestic labor force, employers who use the program must pay a so-called "adverse effect wage rate," which is 30-40 percent higher than prevailing domestic rates, reimburse worker transportation, provide free housing, and subsidize meals.)

The techniques used by Legal Services programs active in farmworker issues range from the dubious to the downright unethical. At hearings before the Legal Services Corporation board in Washington, D.C. early in 1986, attorney Steven Karalekas, who has represented Maryland growers, complained that Legal Services attorneys would accompany one or more workers to an employment service office and specify the grower to which they should be sent, and lo and behold, those workers subsequently sued the targeted farmer. In effect, Karalekas complained, Legal Services lawyers were setting up lawsuits at the employment office before the workers had even been hired. (LSC board member Robert Valois referred to this practice bluntly as "planting workers in growers' camps for purposes of generating complaints and litigations."[2])

In addition Legal Services attorneys use what look suspiciously like "professional plaintiffs." Attorney Tom Wilson notes, for example, that the same names—Cedrick Turner and Wilfred Pierre are particular favorites—pop up in litigation. Sometimes the same plaintiff performs in different jurisdictions and sometimes he moves from farm to farm within the same jurisdiction, filing the same complaint on the same issue against different farmers. Wilson brought suit to have one of Maryland Legal Aid's cases dismissed on the grounds that workers had signed under oath a document they could not read (the documents were in English and the workers spoke only Spanish) and in a couple of cases probably never even saw (only the signature pages had been sent through the mail).

Sometimes Legal Services does away with the pretense of representing any clients at all. Not satisfied with their success in decertifying Hepburn, Legal Services attorneys returned to the attack when Hepburn turned to the Glassboro Service Association in a last ditch effort to obtain Puerto Rican workers to harvest his peach crop. They filed suit even though they were forced to admit they represented no client with a cause of action against Hepburn.

Although the purpose of administrative proceedings was to provide a less costly alternative to litigation, Legal Services attorneys often simultaneously bring actions on the identical issue before a federal court and in adminis-

[2]Transcript of Proceedings, Legal Services Corporation, Washington, D.C., January 31, 1986, p. 163.

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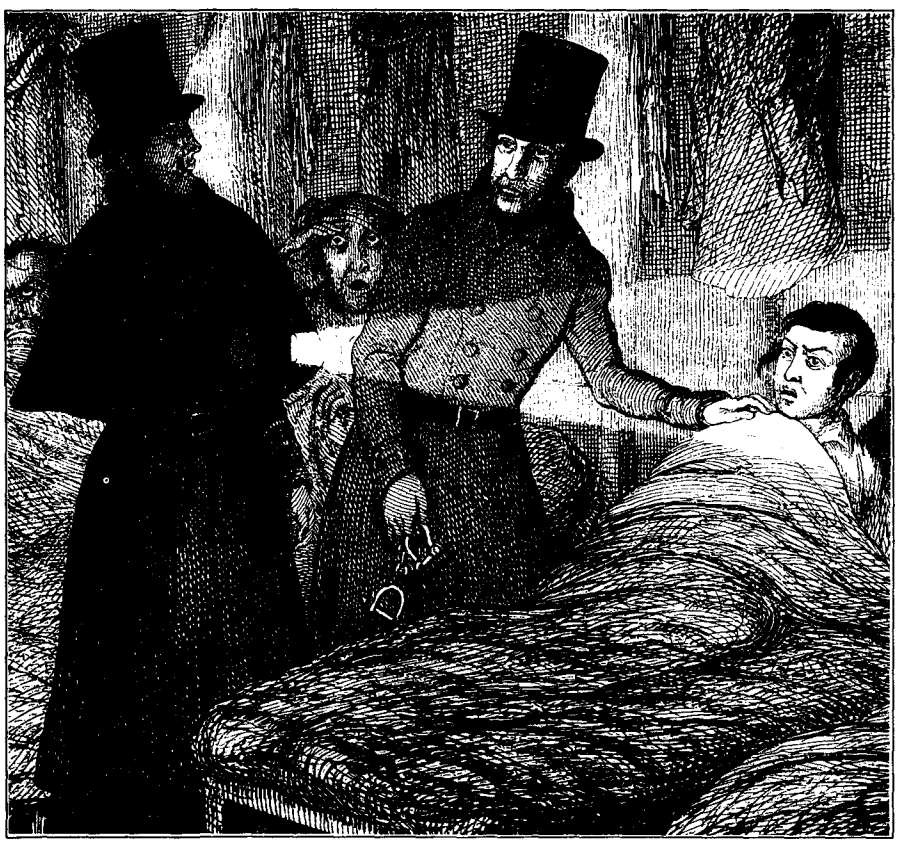
trative proceedings before the U.S. Department of Labor. With their customary adeptness in using the system against itself, Legal Services lawyers simply treat administrative agencies and courts as dual forums in which to harass and drain their victims. To inflict further emotional and financial stress, Legal Services has brought suit against farmers under the so-called "RICO" statutes (Racketeer-Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act), designed for use against organized crime. Because of the stigma associated with the word "racketeer," these suits, as the Second Circuit Court of Appeals has pointed out, have become "a good settlement weapon." Beyond the stigma, RICO suits further drive up farmers' costs because under RICO statutes, the farmer can be sued for triple damages.

The farmworker, in other words, is simply a tool in the strategy of the Legal Services game-planner. While the courts may, on occasion, recognize and deplore this practice, they do nothing to discourage it. The case of Sherman and Debra Paulk offers a good example. The Paulks were would-be farmworkers who brought suit against the Virginia Agricultural Growers Association on the grounds that they were prevented from working by the failure of the association's farmers to advance them money to move from Georgia to Virginia. (Farmers do not make such advances because in the past workers have pocketed the money and not shown up. They often pay back travel expenses *after* workers appear and have worked for a time.) According to the Paulks' own testimony, Robert Willis, the attorney for Farmworkers Legal Services, filed suit on the Paulks' behalf three hours *before* they had called to apprise him of the facts of their situation! The association's attorneys argued in court that the Paulks and Willis had "contrived this case." The court found that the elaborate charges, including a supposed "conspiracy" between the Department of Labor and the Virginia growers, were all untrue. Judge Jackson Kiser of the U.S. District Court in Virginia ruled: "I believe and continue to believe that the Paulks were no more than pawns in the hands of the Farmworkers Legal Services of North Carolina."



A North Carolina farmer reports that two of the four farmworkers bringing suit through Legal Services had worked for him, between them, a total of seven hours.

This meritless suit cost the targeted farmers $60,000. But when the attorneys for the growers returned to court to sue for attorney fees, which constituted the sole sanction that could be brought to discourage further such suits by Farmworkers Legal Services, the judge refused to grant the claim. He noted that the statute which permits recovery of fees against the Legal Services Corporation stipulates that an action must have been pursued "for the *sole* purpose of harassment" or that the Corporation had "*maliciously* abused legal process." Kiser declared that as a matter of law he could not rule that the claims "were prosecuted totally in bad faith." And while he was "sympathetic to the tremendous cost and burden incurred . . . this unfortunately is the nature of the litigation beast."

The response of Legal Services attorneys to the protests of farmers is one of arrogant indifference. They even deny the right of farmers to question LSC activities. In February 1985 the six Maryland growers referred to earlier, their legal fees having mounted to over $300,000, filed a formal letter of complaint with the board of the Maryland Legal Aid Bureau, and asked for an investigation. In addition to a lengthy letter outlining the questionable practices of the program's attorneys, the attorneys for the growers sent to each board member copies of the letters and complaints filed against them, which mounted to a four-foot stack. The xeroxing bill alone was $6,000. The head of Maryland Legal Aid, after a month's silence, responded with a single sentence saying the board saw no reason to take any action. When Steven Karalekas, one of the growers' attorneys, testified concerning these events to the national Legal Services Corporation board, members were incredulous:

[Board member] Michael Wallace: They gave you no copy of their complaint procedures?

Mr. Karalekas: Nothing.

Mr. Wallace: They gave you no hearing, filed no answer, told you to go jump in a lake.

Mr. Karalekas: In one sentence.

Stuart Cohen of the Maryland Legal Aid Bureau was present at the hearings. Far from making excuses or apologies, he denounced them as a "witch hunt." As for the Bureau's one line rejection of the growers' plea for an investigation, Cohen declared: "Mr. Karalekas told you that their complaint was answered. He did not like the answer, but their complaint was answered." The very right of the growers to complain at all was challenged. Another spokesman for the Bureau decried the "audacity" of the growers in writing to the administrative superiors of the Legal Services attorneys bringing suit.

Legal Services attorneys offer as their major defense their winning record. At the Washington hearings before the national LSC board, an attorney for Pine Tree Legal Assistance in Maine declared that he had gathered information from the various Legal Services programs dealing with farmworker issues and claimed their "batting average" was 94 percent. This, Legal Services attorneys repeatedly state, is the key. Thus during hearings in Texas, David Hall, the director of Texas Rural Legal Aid, declared that the Hereford office had won all but two of its cases and "that winning record, that exemplary winning record," was the cause of the Legal Services controversy. Another Legal Services attorney said that the desperate appeals and complaints heard from the panels speaking for the growers were merely so many testimonials to the splendid job Legal Services attorneys were doing for their clients. Yet another spokesman for Legal Services in Texas dismissed the "bleats of outrage" as coming "from folks in the right-wing wilderness." Actually, the high batting average of Legal Services attorneys is testimony to the financial imperative virtually every farmer targeted by Legal Services experiences, whether before or after the suit has entered federal court, to settle on whatever terms he can get.

One effect of Legal Services litigation has been to accelerate the trend toward agricultural mechanization. Farmers employing seasonal labor are those primarily hit by Legal Services suits, so there is little wonder that the solution, wherever possible, is seen in eliminating the need for such labor. The response of Legal Services is to try to outlaw mechanization. In the process they threaten to damage not only farmers and consumers, but to politicize academic research. The key case here is a seven-year-old suit, which at this writing has still not gone to court, brought by California Rural Legal Assistance, one of the oldest Legal Services programs in the country. The suit is against the University of California at Davis to prevent research on new varieties of fruits and vegetables and on new agricultural machinery. The suit charges that the "mindset" of researchers is oriented toward the needs of large farmers and not those of farmworkers and small farmers. (Although Legal Services purports to represent the interests of small farmers, the Grange, an association primarily of small farmers, has entered the case on the side of the university, asserting that machinery benefits small farmers as well, who rent or share equipment.)

George Marchand, one of the university's attorneys in the case, points out that the attack is not limited to mechanization, for mechanization is defined as including any studies in agricultural biology that conceivably might increase the use of machines. Thus, the suit seeks to halt sixty-nine projects, among them: "Culture and Physiology of Asparagus," "Breeding Cantaloupes and Mixed Melons,"

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"Field Research in Pear Decline," and "Grape and Wine Fermentation Studies." "This constitutes the most fundamental challenge to academic freedom you can imagine," Marchand says. If Legal Services wins the case the door is open for any self-styled "public interest group" to go to court and claim that research being conducted by a college or university receiving government funds (virtually all of them) is not "in the public interest" or impinges unfavorably on the interests of some group.

Yet this suit, despite repeated requests by attorneys for the university that it be dismissed, grinds on toward trial. Marchand observes that it has already cost the taxpayers (who of course pay both to bring and to defend the suit) millions of dollars, not to mention the enormous time taken from university researchers and personnel from whom, Marchand notes, "mountains of information" were demanded throughout a discovery period lasting four years.

The case against the University of California, by now known in legal circles as the "ag-mech case," underlines the failure of the U.S. judicial system in the face of the ideological assault by Legal Services attorneys. However, while in the ag-mech case the costs are evenly spread among taxpayers, the individual farmer is left to bear alone the consequences of that failure. The Department of Labor and Congress share much of the blame. Some blame even accrues to the representatives of the farmers themselves, who had a voice in framing the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Protection Act of 1983, whose provisions Legal Services attorneys have exploited to produce the explosion in suits against farmers.

What has made the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Protection Act a lethal weapon in the hands of Legal Services attorneys is its provision that the farmer is a "joint employer" with the crew leader, and that workers can bring action for substantial damages on each violation of the law. This means that the farmer can be held responsible for violations over which he has no control. For example, although the crew leader recruits the workers, the farmer can be held responsible if the crew leader fails to inform them fully of the conditions of work. The farmer typically pays the crew leader for the labor done by his men, but he can be held responsible if the crew leader then improperly fails to pay Social Security taxes for the men or uses vehicles in transportation not meeting government standards. Legal Services typically bypasses the crew leader actually responsible for some violation (or demands only a token sum from him) while demanding huge settlements from the farmer. The reason is not hard to seek—crew leaders generally have scarcely more money than farmworkers, while farmers are adjudged, at least by Legal Services, to have deep pockets.

There is also the problem that Legal Services makes no distinction between serious violations and trivial ones. While the Department of Labor does make such distinctions, Legal Services cheerfully goes for the jugular, whether the issue is a trivial failure to post a sign or a serious wage or safety violation, or a violation for which the worker is in fact responsible. For example, the farmer can be sued for housing violations even though his camp has been inspected and approved by the County Health Department, the U.S. Department of Labor, OSHA, and Wage and Hour inspectors. The farmer has the duty to "maintain" the premises, and attorney James Levinson points out that Legal Services attorneys, armed with cameras, will often visit a housing camp first thing on a Monday morning, when after a weekend of partying, workers may have broken screen doors and liberally sprinkled the premises with beer cans and bottles.

The courts and the administrative systems, which could put a leash on Legal Services, encourage its abuse of legal process. As the Paulk case illustrates, Legal Services can bring outrageous suits without suffering any sanction. That case illustrates another way in which the system permits abuse—forum shopping. The Paulks were in Georgia. The Legal Services office filing suit on their behalf was in North Carolina. The farmers targeted by the suit were in Virginia. And the suit was brought in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, noted for its judges sympathetic to Legal Services complaints against farmers, including most especially Judge Charles Richey. Legal Services typically seeks to bring suit before urban judges and urban juries, unfamiliar with farm conditions.

In addition to his own legal fees, the farmer may find that a court ruling requiring him to pay relatively trivial amounts to workers also entails payment of huge legal fees to Legal Services, despite the fact that Legal Services salaries and expenses are wholly paid for by the government. For example, Richard and Darlene Mattner, who have a produce farm in Eau Claire, Michigan, were sued by Legal Services on behalf of thirty-seven migrant workers for alleged minimum-wage violations. Although a judge well known for his sympathy to migrants could find only $611 in such violations (Legal Services had sued for many thousands), Legal Services then presented its own bill for $37,000.

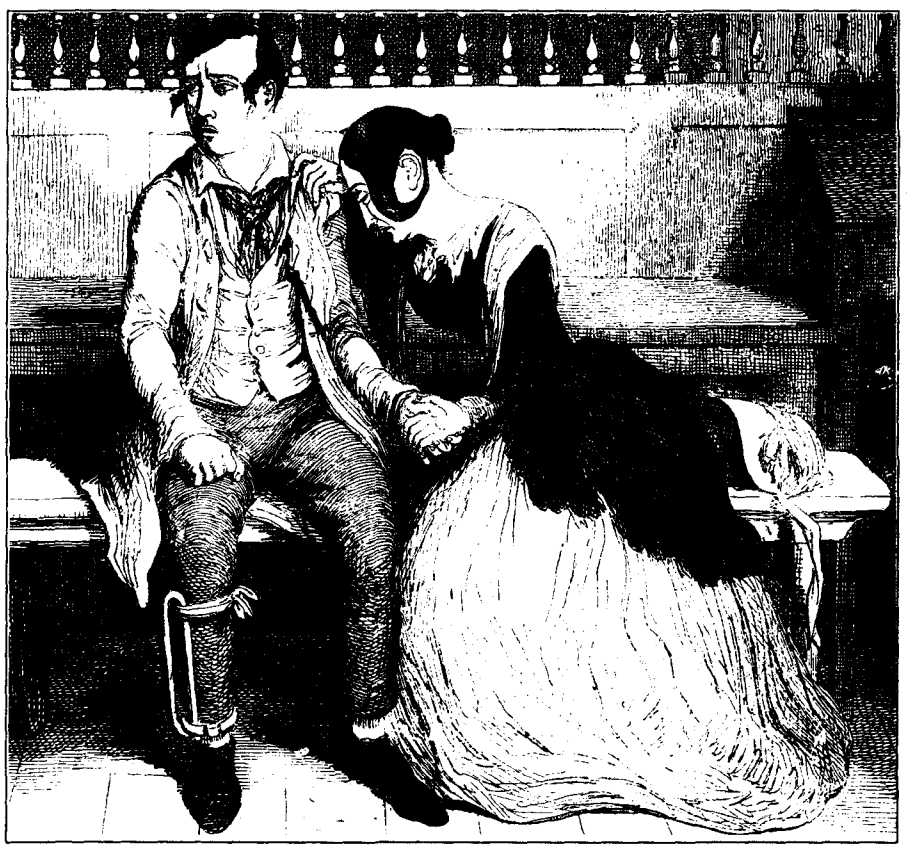
Attorney Tom Wilson, who says he would rather litigate against a John D. Rockefeller than Legal Services because a Rockefeller's resources are limited at some point, explains part of the success Legal Services has had: "Take a law. You go to court on every single issue, and let me tell you, in this society if you bring enough lawsuits, I don't care how outlandish the allegations, at some point you will find a federal judge who will agree with you. Then you will have established a precedent, and you cite it, cite it, cite it in every other case. And the federal judiciary lets itself be used."

Although many Legal Services attorneys see themselves as the champion of Mexicans as against "Anglos," many of the targeted farmers in Texas have been Mexican-Americans.

What do the Legal Services attorneys targeting farmers seek to accomplish? In the short term, a major goal is elimination of the H2 program. It apparently does not occur to Legal Services attorneys that without the supplementary labor provided by the H2 program the farmers who use it would simply go out of business, and imports would replace the affected crops.

Unionization is another target. For example, the Mattners experienced their host of complaints in the immediate aftermath of a pickle-pickers' strike on their farm. Their attorney, Richard van Orden, says that in the local migrant Legal Services office there are signs advertising Cesar Chavez's United Farmworkers Union. Texas Rural Legal Assistance has close ties to both the Texas Farmworkers Union (the former chairman of the board of Texas Rural Legal Assistance, Alfredo De Avila, is an organizer for that union) and to its far-left offshoot, the International Union of Industrial and Agricultural Workers. (Jesus Moya, its leader, was a member of the board of the Texas Rural Legal Foundation, the "mirror corporation" set up by Texas Rural Legal Assistance.) At the Texas hearings before the national LSC board the conclusion of a "demand letter" sent by Deborah Smith, an attorney for Texas Rural Legal Aid, was read out: "Without litigation . . . please be aware that my clients would be willing to consider any reasonable counteroffer you may regard, including the acceptance of a lesser amount of monetary damages if accompanied by successful negotiation of a union contract." Needless to say, while farmworkers have a right to join unions, Legal Services attorneys have no right to use their ability to bring suit for violations of the law as a means to coerce farmers to sign union contracts.

More fundamentally, many Legal Services attorneys seek to use the judicial system to overturn our political



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and economic institutions. Tom Wilson is scathing: "You have a bunch of political ideologues that are having fun bashing the system. This is sport for them. Indoor sport. Fun." There is a dual component of political zealotry and play, as what are in many cases affluent young men from elite law schools go forth to slay the capitalist dragon. The farmer is simply the most vulnerable of many targets in a broader campaign.

In 1979 the National Lawyers Guild (NLG), an association of far-left attorneys, reported that a survey of its 6,000 members had found that 1,000 of them were employed by Legal Services. (Fully a third worked for government agencies.) In addition the NLG found that many of its attorneys were members of the local boards that set the policy of Legal Services offices. Although the NLG has not reported the results of any more recent surveys, the number has almost certainly grown, both because the NLG's membership has risen substantially and because organizing within Legal Services has been an NLG priority only since 1980, when NLG Vice President Grant Crandall noted that this largest concentration of legal workers in the country had not yet been seriously tapped by the Guild. Since there are 6400 attorneys and paralegals employed by LSC, it is reasonable to estimate that up to 20 percent of them belong to the NLG.

Legal Services programs recruit staff in the NLG's publication, *Guild Notes*. The trials of the farming community of Hereford, Texas are readily understandable in the light of an ad that appeared in *Guild Notes* of March-April 1982: "Texas Rural Legal Aid, Farmworkers Division, is seeking staff attorneys for its Hereford and Weslaco offices. These attorneys will handle aggressive, impact-oriented labor and civil rights litigation for migrant and seasonal farmworkers."

The interests of the NLG extend far beyond farmworkers. It is a member of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, an international Soviet front organization, and the NLG's annual resolutions attack everything from the American system of justice (which "is used to hound, attack, imprison, and execute the oppressed minorities, workers and political activists") to our military forces (in 1983 the Guild undertook to "educate Guild members and chapters . . . as to the most effective means of supporting resistance within the military"). In 1983, then incoming president Barbara Dudley (formerly a staff attorney with California Rural Legal Assistance) announced that NLG's goals went beyond shelter, jobs, food, and education: its primary goal was "direct control by the people over the resources of this country. . . . We want not just a piece of the pie, but the whole damn pie shop."

"If someone told me fourteen years ago when I became general manager of this orchard that I'd be in federal court three times in one year, I'd probably laugh."

Melinda Bird, then the NLG's incoming Vice President for Economic Rights (and a staff attorney at one of the Legal Service Corporation's "national support centers," the Western Center on Law and Poverty), declared that the Guild would struggle against current policies of "economic genocide" directed against workers and Third World peoples and would "take direction from people's movements and help defend and advance them." She noted that many Guild attorneys were already involved in advancing "economic rights" through their work with Legal Services. Steve Saltzman, an earlier candidate for treasurer of the NLG and an attorney for the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, declared that the success of their work would depend "on how well we and the people with whom we work understand how to exploit the contradictions in the system."

Not surprisingly, Legal Services spokesmen espouse a philosophy that has striking similarities to that of NLG leaders. At a conference of Legal Services staff, Bari Schwartz of the Food Research and Action Center, one of the national support centers, told those assembled that "what all of us ultimately care about" is "a meaningful redistribution of wealth and income in this country." Similarly Gary Bellow, then with the Legal Services Institute, an offshoot of Greater Boston Legal Services, in a speech prepared for delivery at a Legal Services conference in 1981 said: "Most of us agree that America maintains a deeply stratified class system; changing this system, and its most recent manifestation in Reagan conservatism, is a primary concern of most of us who do Legal Services work. . . ." Bellow called for linking up with the women's movement, anti-racism coalitions, and a wide range of environmental, anti-nuclear, and other groups. A number of such "networking" conferences have indeed been funded by Legal Services with training in lobbying techniques a primary emphasis. (Six such conferences were funded specifically for the purpose of "improving networking and coalition building in support of farmworkers.")

The blame for Legal Services' continuing to function as a haven for radical attorneys in their assault upon the "system" (at the system's expense) lies primarily with Congress, which has staunchly fought off efforts at reform made by the Reagan Administration. Indeed, although the Legal Services Corporation's present board has been trying to curb the worst abuses, Congress has effectively taken the governance of the program out of the board's hands. This it has done through the passage annually of "continuing resolutions" that mandate the continued funding at the same level of every program (with annual increments, depending upon increases in overall funding), no matter what its record of performance. The Legal Services Corporation board, which is supposed to be the policy-setter and monitor for the program, has been reduced to a check-writing machine. The Senate Appropriations subcommittee that oversees the LSC has made the unprecedented demand that every regulation, every change in procedure, be submitted to it for approval.

Since New Hampshire Senator Warren Rudman, the subcommittee chairman, has in practice taken charge, the Legal Services Corporation staff looks upon him as the man who effectively runs the corporation. And under his guidance, the response of the appropriations subcommittee to each major initiative on the part of the corporations board in 1986 has been "No." It was "no" to reducing funds for the national support centers, "no" to reducing funds for migrant programs (even though, according to the Department of Agriculture, migrants have dropped to 115,000 in 1981 [from 422,000 in 1949], 5 percent of all seasonal farmworkers), "no" to closing regional offices whose activities duplicate the national office, "no" to reducing ("consciousness-raising") training grants, "no" to restrictions on lobbying activities in so-called "free time" during trips paid for by federal funds, "no" to new functional accounting procedures that would make it possible to determine how in fact local programs allocate their time and resources (at present it is impossible for the national office to ascertain such basic facts), "no" to purchasing computer hardware to facilitate data-keeping (and thus accountability), "no" to a proposed grant to law school clinics (with matching grants from the schools) as a training opportunity for pro bono services to the poor.

In August 1986, the Senate Appropriations subcommittee once again removed all power of the Legal Services board to regulate the activities of the groups it funds by specifying how all its funds were to be allocated. For example, in June the board voted to eliminate the national and state support centers, which serve as the radical think tanks of the system, as line items in the budget. But the Senate subcommittee has put them back, mandating over $15 million for the national and state support centers. Similarly the board wanted to cut back on the migrant programs that harass farmers, but Rudman's subcommittee has mandated almost $10 million for migrant programs. It is ironic that an author of the Gramm-Rudman bill should be so adamantly opposed to reducing expenditures for Legal Services, with its immense impact on government costs. The annual expense of actually running the Legal Services program is the least of these costs. LSC programs sue government agencies on a host of issues, almost all of them demanding major expenditures.

Because of this assured congressional protection, Legal Services programs reject any criticism or directives from the national board. At LSC national board hearings in Florida in February 1986, board member Michael Wallace boasted that at the earlier hearings in Washington he had given "unmitigated grief" to the representatives of Maryland Legal Aid for failing to respond with more than a sentence to the plea for an investigation by Maryland growers. But the Maryland

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Legal Aid Bureau, at this writing, eight months later, has never added to that single sentence. In Florida, on hearing the same story of abuses of the program, the board obtained an agreement from the head of Florida Legal Services to meet with a representative of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation to work on some method for mediation of disputes to reduce the volume of litigation. Dean Saunders of the Florida Farm Bureau told me he followed up with several letters to Florida Legal Services, managing after a number of months to elicit this response from the program's migrant unit: "We will be in touch with you." That was the end of that.

The reasons for congressional refusal to rein in Legal Services have to do in part with fear of media reaction. With the notable exception of the *Wall Street Journal* and *Reader's Digest*, the national media treat every criticism of Legal Services programs as an attack upon the poor. They ignored, for example, hearings held by Senators Orrin Hatch and Jeremiah Denton exposing the enormous (and illegal) grassroots lobbying campaign begun by Legal Services in 1981 in order to influence Congress to maintain the program intact. On the other hand, the media lent itself to a campaign by the so-called Legal Services "generals" (a number of ousted officials in the national office) to shift attention from the probe instituted by the first Reagan-appointed board into abuses of the program to supposed overcharging by board members for their services. A General Accounting Office investigation found the charges without merit, but in the meantime they served their purpose by removing the spotlight from the program to the board.

The organized bar has probably been even more important in stifling reform over the years. Whether because the program appeals to its selfish or generous impulses (or both), the bar has provided a constant drumbeat of reassurance to congressmen, so many of them lawyers themselves, that Legal Services is sound, abuses exaggerated or trivial. In *Legal Services*, their history of LSC, Alan Houseman and John Dooley note that the American Bar Association in 1981 embarked upon an unprecedented effort to lobby Congress and this "was a major factor, if not a deciding factor, in the survival of the Legal Services Corporation and the federally funded Legal Services program." The particularly pronounced enthusiasm of the New Hampshire organized bar for Legal Services may do much to explain Warren Rudman's protectiveness of the program. The executive director of the New Hampshire Bar Association even took the trouble to travel to the LSC board's Texas hearings. She announced that the board might wonder why she was there, but it was on behalf "of some little, very elusive concept that we call justice." She protested that the Legal Services community was "trying to provide truth, justice, dignity" while "their efforts are being thwarted and their energies drained" by the national board. For the board's efforts to institute reforms she had only a plaintive reproach: "We wonder if you really feel good about what you have done. We wonder if you feel good about how you have been received by Congress. We wonder if you feel good about how you have been received by the private bar."

California Rural Legal Assistance has brought suit against the University of California at Davis to prevent research on new varieties of fruits and vegetables and on new agricultural machinery.

But even if Congress were to permit the national board to assume its rightful authority over Legal Services programs, and were to pass a reauthorization statute with clearer, more restrictive language (Senator Denton has described the LSC Act as "a law where the loopholes have loopholes"), and even were it to make the program a federal agency (at present, as an "independent" corporation it is accountable to no one), it is questionable whether the program could be brought under control.

With each year, the federal government provides an ever smaller percentage of Legal Services funds. Outside funding has gone from $47.8 million in 1982 to $106 million in 1985. Part of the money comes from state and local governments but increasingly the funding is coming from the IOLTA program, or Interest on Lawyer's Trust Accounts, which gives the short-term interest earned on clients' money while in lawyers' hands to Legal Services. Started in Florida five years ago, the program, now mandatory in seven states, already contributes $40 million a year to Legal Services, and by next year, according to Leeanne Bernstein, a member of the LSC's national board, is expected to reach $100 million. The potential, should it become mandatory in such states as New York, is enormous.

IOLTA funds are subject to no restrictions. LSC programs can use IOLTA funds to practice law within the broad limits laid down by Dooley and Houseman, who define Legal Services as "what creative lawyers bring to court or take before other forums." But even if there were no IOLTA funds, and Congress passed strict restrictions on Legal Services activities, it is questionable whether these would have any impact. Certainly the fate of restrictions passed thus far by Congress gives fair warning that the "creative lawyers" of Legal Services will find ways to deprive them of meaning.[3]

The central problem is the staff attorney system, which gives power and control to the provider, not the consumer, of Legal Services. In this system real clients, with specific problems of immediate concern to them only, obtain services as an adjunct to the core activity of the program, which is public interest law, with the lawyer pursuing his personal view (or in practice the view of the coterie to which he belongs) of the public interest. Essentially the staff system produces client-less lawyering designed to "change the system." Insofar as some client involvement is deemed advisable, LSC programs engage in "consciousness-raising of oppression" through "training" grants for clients and community activists. Such training programs then become the breeding grounds for militant organizations on behalf of whom Legal Services can bring suit or engage in "legislative advocacy." Nor should it be overlooked that the views of Legal Services attorneys concerning the needs of the poor often directly conflict with those needs as poor people define them.[4]

The only way to overcome this central difficulty is to restore control to the client. It is questionable if access to lawyers for civil cases ranks high among the needs of the poor. But if this society sees fit to allocate resources in this way, a voucher system would at least restore to the client control over his case. To meet the problem of unlimited demand generated by a free good, the client could be required to make a modest co-payment. Such a system would have the additional advantage of enabling the client, if he so desired, to select one of the burgeoning mediation programs that are now cutting down unnecessary litigation for the middle class, but are staunchly resisted by Legal Services programs.

Finally, it must be said that the Reagan Administration has been clumsy and half-hearted in its efforts at reform. Hoping to eliminate the program, the Administration failed for a full year to appoint a new board, allowing the Carter-appointed board and its staff appointees to embark on the grassroots lobbying campaign that succeeded in keeping the program intact. The Administration has made no effort to educate the public, leaving the board helpless before the united hostile front of media and Congress. It must stand as a major scandal of the Reagan years that Legal Services has been permitted to continue its abusive course unchecked. □

[3]For example, when Congress ruled that Legal Services programs could not represent illegal aliens, LSC attorneys interpreted this to mean that such representation was forbidden only after the final deportation order had been signed by a judge. When Congress, in an attempt to prevent the National Lawyers Guild from exerting influence on local programs, ruled that all attorneys on local boards had to be members of the bar association with the "majority" of attorneys in the community, the NLG advised its members active in Legal Services matters to join the ABA. And so on.

[4]Legal Services attorneys have been in the forefront of the battle to prevent criminal, disruptive, and non-paying tenants from being removed from housing projects, including projects owned and run by poor people anxious to maintain their property. They have come down on the side of the so-called "deadbeat daddies" when judges have sought to enforce child support payments for mothers without other sources of income. In their endless prison conditions suits, Legal Services attorneys come down on the side of one group of poor—prisoners—at the expense of the much larger proportion of law abiding poor, whose share of services is reduced by the need for massive expenditures on new prisons (or who alternatively experience the brunt of depradations of released prisoners).

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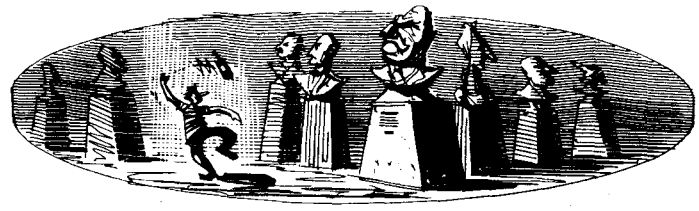

POWERTOWN CUPCAKE

by Andrew Ferguson

A journalist, said Karl Kraus, is someone who, given time, writes worse. The proposition may be extended thus: Every journalist has a novel inside him, and if he's smart he'll keep it there. These sound sentiments come to mind whenever Tom Wicker (let's say) puffs up like a blowfish and exhales one of his long, gassy pot-boilers, sending the prolix pages fluttering earthward as the reading public yawns and wise-ass reviewers snicker. Yet in the face of such discouraging precedent the hacks persevere; borne ceaselessly toward the chimera of best-selling respectability and a big-buck option on a TV mini-series, they take sabbaticals or early retirement, and the novels come tumbling down.

Doubtless the current example of Sally Quinn won't help matters. She too was a well-known journalist, for many years the author of acerbic profiles in the *Washington Post* "Style" section before marrying Ben Bradlee, the editor of the *Post*. In her retirement she too has harkened to the little voice telling her that deep wells of narrative talent could be tapped during a month or two at the keyboard of her IBM PC. And the gargantuan result—a novel called *Regrets Only*[1]—has likewise been parodied and pilloried by the reviewers. But for some reason Sally Quinn and her novel prosper. Two months after its release, *Regrets Only* is number seven on the *New York Times* bestseller list, and her friends at the *Washington Post Book World* have notched it up to number five. Bidding for the paperback rights is feverish. Her agent's phone jingles with calls from the coast. Even now, Sally boasts, Warren Beatty is thumbing through the pages, choosing his part.

But why Sally's novel, and not (let's say) Tom's? Here, for once, the publisher's hype strikes an unwonted note of truth. The promo materials say that *Regrets Only* is "*The* Washington Novel, a biting inside novel of power, sex and politics as it is played in the greatest arena of them all." Leaving aside Henry Adams—as most people do—there is no reason to doubt that this is so. *Regrets Only* is as windy and empty as the city itself, a suitably bloated testament to Washington's current fixed idea: the "old town" really is the most interesting and exciting city in the world, the greatest arena of them all. The testament is delivered, moreover, by the high priestess of the cult dedicated to advancing the proposition. Sally Quinn, former career girl and now middle-aged hostess extraordinaire, is a Washington celebrity of the first water, and if anyone knows Powertown, it is—as Sally might say—her.

In press interviews, Sally has taken to describing *Regrets Only* as a "comedy of manners." The term is a familiar SOS nowadays, usually sent up by panicked first-time novelists who have reread the final galley proofs and suddenly realized that, while busily describing table settings, facial coloring, clothes, hair, and furniture, they have forgotten to include a plot. She has, however, brought in busloads of characters—by my count, twenty-seven in the first thirty pages alone. But they are not so much characters, really, as Names to which she attaches gobs of awkwardly phrased dialogue. As they speak, she shoves the Names to and fro, dragging them in the White House gate to see the President on one page, then hauling the Names back to the newsroom the next, where she makes them speak long and loud about the ethics of journalism. (You can almost *hear* the drone.) To give the illusion of time passing, Sally changes the clothes of the girl Names with great frequency and attention; the boy Names, being boys, are more rumpled—for instance, Sally would never fasten the top shirt button of a boy Name. She takes the Names to dinner parties where she props them up at tables and shovels food into their mouths. In Washington restaurants she serves them delicious meals (some of *Regrets Only* is pure fantasy). At bars she pours Irish whiskey and Chablis down their throats. While there, whether sober or pissed, the Names flap their lips in extended discussions of vague but important issues—this imparts a Washington feel—competing for scoops about White House infighting, appointments to cabinet posts, and dealings with the Russians, who are not friendly toward Washington. Before these gabfests can get burdensome, though, she takes the Names into bedrooms and, leaving the lights on, commands them to copulate, which they do, with inexhaustible virtuosity. Then she makes them argue, and then she makes them copulate again. Sally likes to watch.

These copulation paragraphs—"copgrafs," you might call them—generally comprise short sentences hitched together, without aid of punctuation, to make one very long sentence. They are, so to speak, the overdrive in Sally's two-gear prose transmission. Occasionally, when she makes the Names chew the cud ("His jaw was square and he worked it when he was silent as though he were chewing his thoughts"), she downshifts and loads up on periods: "The dream had left her disoriented and confused. This was a new dream. She had read a couple of dream books. There was a recurrent theme in her dreams." She also spends much of the book idling in neutral:

> This was the real problem between them. Des [a boy Name] never wanted to talk about anything that involved the two of them.
>
> The relationship.
>
> It had taken on a huge meaning in their lives. It had acquired all capital letters.
>
> THE RELATIONSHIP.

And so on, which helps explain why *Regrets Only* is 556 pages long.

None of the novel's most telling Washington touches—the flatulent dialogue or the bogus characters, the exhaustive sartorial details or the unconvincing talk of ethics—will come as a surprise to anyone who has followed Sally's career. Hers is *the* Washington success story, just as *Regrets Only* is *the* Washington novel. When in 1969 Ben Bradlee first con-

[1]Simon and Schuster, $18.95.

Andrew Ferguson is assistant managing editor of The American Spectator.

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sidered hiring her as a reporter for Style, she had never written anything longer than morbid valentines to an endless string of beaux. But she knew how to throw a party, and she had connections in Washington society—her father had been prominent in the military—and she had other, more important qualifications as well: gnawing ambition, an utter lack of scruples, a big mouth, and great legs. The great legs would help her get the good quotes—judging by the results, in fact, Sally developed an interviewing technique that resembled a journalistic Heimlich maneuver—and the lack of scruples and her big mouth would permit her to write anything she thought she heard. Bradlee hired her on the spot.

Sally's singular achievement was to take the sort of talk that buzzed through the Georgetown telephone wires every morning after a big party, dress it up as journalism, and dare her editors to smear it over the Style section. She denied she was a gossip. She was a journalist: "I covered parties the way someone on the 'Metro' section covers a crime." Her editors bought it. In clinging dresses and stiletto heels she crashed the salons where the Washington greats gather to praise one another, and scoop followed scoop. Joking with her at a party one night, Henry Kissinger called himself a "secret swinger." He read about it in Style the next day. During the final days of the first Carter campaign, a rich Southern couple bought a house in Georgetown and gained social cachet by claiming to be friends of the Carters. And so they were, as it turned out, but Sally fired off a 3500-word story saying they weren't. They left town. A hayseed from Pocatello, Idaho, moved to Washington and invited bigshots to his parties. Sometimes they came, and the situation was getting out of hand. Sally collected some quotes from people who didn't like him, strung them together newspaper-fashion, and the next Sunday the "story" appeared on the front page of Style. That ended that. "It was like finding the cure for cancer," she said.

As she covered her beat Sally would occasionally hear talk of things like politics and foreign affairs, and her curiosity induced her to broaden her range. In 1977 she went with Ben to Cuba. As they sipped daiquiris in their Havana hotel suite, Fidel came to call. "He is not seeing us as journalists," she wrote, "but as friends." And what a friend Sally turned out to be! She ended her eight-part series on Cuba with a tribute to the hero of the Sierra Maestra, presenting it the way she knew best. She started with his clothes: "He is wearing green fatigues, freshly pressed and beautifully tailored, gathered at the bottom." When "Fidelito," as she called him, drew a bead on her with his big baby browns, she went mushy inside—even with Ben right there beside her on the couch: "It is so penetrating as to make you look away, as though he suddenly knows all your thoughts." Her eyes settled on his hands: "the hands of an intellectual, sensitive hands." Fidelito spoke shyly: "I am not a truly powerful person," he said, and sliding the pencil from her mouth, Sally wiped it off and scribbled the quote down in her reporter's notebook, next to all her other adjectives—adjectives had always been a signature of Sally's stories, and for Fidel she emptied the closet: "surprisingly vulnerable, gentle and appealing . . . calm, logical, reasoned . . . highly complicated, sophisticated, intelligent . . ."

It was more characteristic of Sally to find the enemy lurking at home: In a three-part profile of Zbigniew Brzezinski—such a funny name!—she portrayed him as a lecherous freeloader, an interloping con artist prowling the corridors of power, posing an inestimable danger to the country at large and especially to her friend from Georgetown, the button-cute and noble Cyrus Vance. To prove her point she

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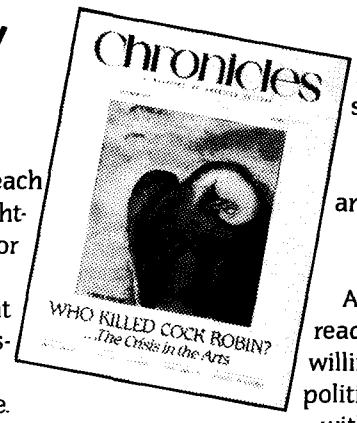

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sent blind quotes sailing through the story; whole paragraphs of unsupportable accusations appeared from nowhere, ascribed to "Brzezinski-watchers"; gossipy items culled from other reporters' notes were set down as definitive anecdotes. It was customary for Sally, when writing about men she didn't like, to intimate to the reader that they had made passes at her, at the same time making it clear that she, siren though she was, had refused them. As a matter of course she did this with the Brzezinski piece, but then she added a new twist: She closed the first installment of the series by saying that during an interview with a female reporter from *People* magazine, Brzezinski had unzipped his fly in a crude sexual advance. As it turned out, that wasn't true either.

Fatuous, unreliable, and always willing to shroud her work in high purpose, Sally was the *Post*'s kind of reporter. The Brzezinski story, she said, was a "study in the politics of the power grab." She had transformed gossip by calling it journalism, and now it was social science: "a kind of contemporary anthropology," said Shelby Coffey, her editor at Style. Her stories were long—just like science reports—and she often divided them into numbered sections: "The Nine Steps of the Power Grab," "The Twelve Laws of Social Climbing." In Washington journalism, this marked Sally as an intellectual. Her writing might be primitive, sometimes even incoherent; but Franz Boas probably couldn't write, either. Many of her stories, like the Brzezinski profile, were little more than extended rants laid out in columns and illustrated with photographs. But at the *Post* her colleagues saw the aura of the moral philosopher shimmering around her work: "Sally has an extraordinarily low threshold for hypocrisy," said her fellow Style writer, Richard Cohen.

A writer who can't write, a reporter inhospitable to fact, a social scientist with the mind of a chronically horny sorority girl—it is fair to ask whether such a creature could have come to prominence anywhere but in Washington. Is there something in this particular coagulation of Southern torpor and democratic politics that affords opportunity even to someone who is, like Sally, wholly lacking in natural gifts save the gift of guile? Having absorbed the Washington sensibility she reduced it to its vulgar essentials, and her rise was swift. Anywhere else, I think, her chances would be slim. In Paris she would be considered in bad taste; in London, impolite; in New York, déclassé. Her legs may have been shapely in the early days, but not shapely enough for L.A.; Chicago would soon make her a moll. In the sensible backwaters—Pocatello, for example—they would wonder why she bleached her hair. □

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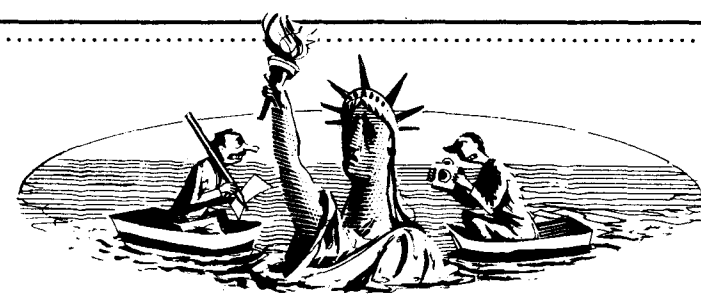

SID'S SEIZURES

by Michael Ledeen

The coveted dunce caps for the month go to Sidney Blumenthal and his hard-working editors at the *Washington Post* for Blumenthal's characteristic blooper on July 17:

> "I always feel elated," said Adolfo Calero, the Nicaraguan contra leader, "to be in the company of fellow freedom fighters and fellow Americans."
>
> *Fellow Americans?*
>
> Calero's unbridled enthusiasm, which apparently inspired him to declare a change of citizenship . . .

While sitting in their corner and wearing their snazzy pointed hats, Blumenthal and the editors should write one hundred times, "We are all citizens of the Americas. We are North Americans, Calero is a Central American. Borges was a Latin American. But we are all *Americans*."

Blumenthal doesn't have to worry about any real punishment from his bosses for this or his numerous other journalistic sins, for he has been given the prestigious position as point-man-in-charge-of-special-operations-against-neoconservatives, and is free to conduct his own sorties as he sees fit. He can count on full support from his commanders, even though he takes few prisoners, and commits the occasional journalistic equivalent of the My Lai massacre.

His most recent transgressions were committed at the expense of Prodemca (Friends of the Democratic Center in Central America), an anti-Sandinista organization headed by my old friend Penn Kemble. The opening salvo came in a front-page story on March 19 ("Grantee of U.S. Endowment Funds Sandinista Opponents; Group's Advertisements Urge Aid for Rebels"). The alleged crime of Prodemca is contained in the headline: that government money (from the National Endowment for Democracy—the NED) was being used both to fund *La Prensa*, the sole publication critical of the regime in Nicaragua, along with a private human-rights organization there, and also to place advertisements in the American press (notably the *New York Times* and the *Post* itself), calling for support for military aid to the contras.

The crime had not been committed (as Kemble made clear in a letter to the *Post* published the next day, and as an internal audit of Prodemca carried out by USIA demonstrated), but Blumenthal did manage to achieve the real objective of the article: create some trouble for Prodemca. This was done by provoking one of the NED's top congressional supporters, Rep. Dan Mica of Florida. "If they spent one cent of government money [on the ads]," Mica responded to a query from Blumenthal, "we'll throw the book at them. . . . I've had it with NED and the grantee if this is what's going on . . ." Then, for extras, Blumenthal picked up a handy quotation from Aryeh Neier, the head of Americas Watch, who is an outspoken opponent of military aid: "Prodemca appears to be flying under false colors in portraying itself as a citizen's organization when it is actually a vehicle for distributing funds to anti-Sandinista organizations." The first eight words of the quotation appeared in a box in the center of the article, conveying the impression that Prodemca was deliberately deceptive.

That's a pretty good result for Blumenthal, who generated the controversy out of thin air: there was no evidence that NED money had been used for the ad, and Kemble had told him that. As I said, when you're in charge of a battle, you needn't be bothered excessively by the niceties of the Marquis of Queensberry Rules of combat.

After a day's rest, Blumenthal attacked again on the 21st ("Nicaraguan Opposition Newspaper Worried About Source of U.S. Funds; Less Controversial Conduit Eventually Was Found"), this time reinforcing his earlier insinuation that Prodemca had done wrong by writing that Prodemca's funding—and support for military aid to the contras—had "provoked anxiety among the editors of *La Prensa*. . . . Eventually, a less controversial conduit was found to replace Prodemca." The notion that there was something wrong about *La Prensa*'s

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receipt of money from Prodemca was subsequently used by Sandinista Ambassador Carlos Tunnermann in justifying his government's closure of *La Prensa* in May:

> On March 19 . . . the *Post* published an article . . . [stating] that *La Prensa* is accepting funding from Prodemca, which in turn receives funds from the National Endowment for Democracy, a U.S. government-financed agency. The article goes on to point out that Prodemca has financed [ads supporting military aid to the contras]. . . . Could it be that Prodemca's goal, which is the violent overthrow of our government, is also the goal of *La Prensa*?

Tunnermann's letter was the subject of a *Post* editorial on May 11, which, although criticizing the censorship of *La Prensa*, criticized the NED and Prodemca for "belatedly" realizing that "Prodemca's indiscriminate mixing of funding and lobbying would be used by the Sandinistas to discredit the newspaper." This was surely absurd, for the Sandinistas would have had no trouble finding a suitable excuse to shut down a newspaper that had already been constantly censored and suspended many times in the past. What the *Post*, beginning with Blumenthal's articles, and continuing with others in the summer (this time attacking Prodemca for sponsoring fact-finding trips to see the contras at first hand for congressional staffers, journalists, and opinion leaders), had done was to grant a certain legitimacy to the Sandinistas' repression. As NED President Carl Gershman wrote to the *Post*, had the Endowment not sent money to *La Prensa*, it would have long since ceased to publish for lack of funds.

If one looks at the facts carefully, it turns out that Prodemca behaved with exemplary propriety. The NED grant for *La Prensa* (which was used to buy supplies for the newspaper and ship them to Managua) began more than a year before Prodemca decided to express its support for military aid. When this decision was taken, both NED and *La Prensa* were informed, and were asked if, as a result of this decision, they wished to terminate Prodemca's role in support for the newspaper. *La Prensa* was in the position of Caesar's wife, and, wishing to avoid all appearance of misbehavior, felt it was the better course of valor to receive its money from someone else.

The bottom line? If only the *Post* had someone that searched as intently for the high crimes and misdemeanors of the Sandinistas as Blumenthal does for the imaginary violations of propriety by the opponents of the Managua regime, we might have something approaching balanced coverage. But Mr. Blumenthal—that great expert on the Americas, you'll recall—has different instructions.

To Lewis Lapham, editor of *Harper's*:

> Do you have to continue to publish articles by people who maintain that the efforts to protect the Western world from international terrorism are either misguided or, worse, an effort to drive us into the hands of dark reaction? The article by Christopher Hitchens in your September issue ("Wanton Acts of Usage; Terrorism: A cliché in search of a meaning") is one of the most mean-spirited I can imagine. The final paragraph says it all:
>
> . . . What is frightening and depressing is that a pseudoscientific propaganda word like "terrorism" has come to have such a hypnotic effect on public debate in the United States. A word which originated with the most benighted opponents of the French Revolution; a word featured constantly in the anti-partisan communiqués of the Third Reich; a word which is a commonplace in the handouts of the Red Army in Afghanistan and the South African army in Namibia. . . . Should we not be wary of a term with which rulers fool themselves and by which history is abolished and language debased?
>
> Should we not be wary of an author who puts his name to such ravings?

In late July, there emerged in the Soviet Union an "underground document" that, in the words of the *New York Times* (and reported in every major newspaper in the country), "says the Soviet Union can halt what it calls a backward slide only by democratizing its society and allowing a political opposition. The statement, by a group calling itself 'Movement for a Socialist Renewal,' is dated Leningrad, Nov. 21, 1985, and is addressed 'to the citizens of the Soviet Union.' "

This report produced a minor sensation for a couple of days, but no one observed that this sort of thing has been a staple feature of KGB disinformation since the first days of the Bolshevik Revolution. All interested citizens should go back and read the classic work by Geoffrey Bailey (*The Conspirators*), which contains the best published account of the infamous "Trust," which was established by Soviet intelligence in the early 1920s. The Trust was purportedly an organization of anti-Bolshevik Russians, who both gathered sensitive information inside the Soviet Union (and passed it to Western intelligence services), and conducted operations of sabotage against the Bolshevik regime. In reality, the entire operation was run by Soviet intelligence (at the time known as the OGPU), with a dual purpose. In Bailey's words:

> On the one hand, *inside* Russia it helped identify and channel into the ranks of an OGPU-run organization such dedicated foes of the regime as Maria Schultz, who otherwise might have remained long undetected. These now became all the easier to observe and control, inasmuch as they willingly accepted what they regarded as elementary rules of conspiracy, i.e., iron discipline and blind obedience to the "initiated few" (all of whom were, of course, trusted agents of the OGPU). Occasionally, even, the zeal and idealism of the rank-and-file would be fanned and then promptly neutralized by what seemed to them like useful "clandestine action." Thus, for instance, anti-Communist leaflets would be run off on OGPU presses, then distributed to bona fide Trust couriers, only to be immediately impounded again and stored, pending further use, in OGPU strong rooms. Occasionally, too, when the rank-and-file showed signs of restlessness, the leaders would rig yet another comedy: One group would urge a "rougher" policy vis-à-vis the Soviet regime, while the other insisted on greater caution. As a result of the ensuing debate, the more fanatically minded or less gullible elements would be duly identified and, if need be, quietly liquidated.
>
> Furthermore, since the existence of the Trust was a carefully kept secret even within the OGPU itself, by checking the latter's watchfulness against the Trust's internal security measures, it became possible to ascertain to what extent the secret police was able to prevent the establishment or survival of a genuine anti-Communist underground in the Soviet Union.
>
> *Outside* the USSR, masquerading as the Trust, the organization served to keep an eye on the activities of [the regime's opponents] and thus effectively to neutralize them, while at the same time acting as a sort of clearinghouse, both for the Western and White Russian agents and propaganda coming *into* the country and for the information (or, more often as not, "misinformation") going *out* of it, most of which, for greater speed and security, traveled by Soviet diplomatic pouch!

As usual, we don't know if the Soviets are playing this old game on us again, but the readers of our newspapers certainly should be reminded that this sort of thing has gone on repeatedly with our Bolshevik comrades. *Caveat lector.* □

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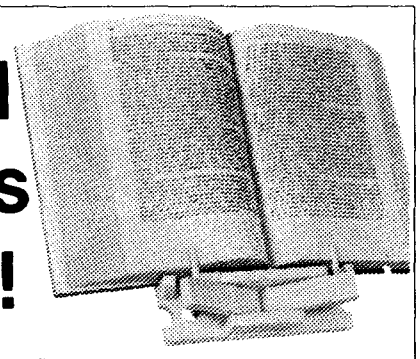

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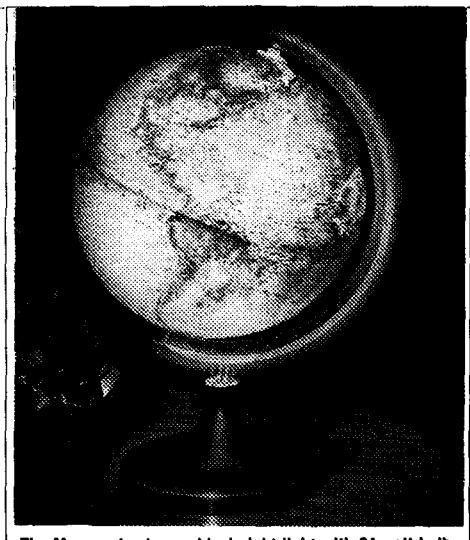

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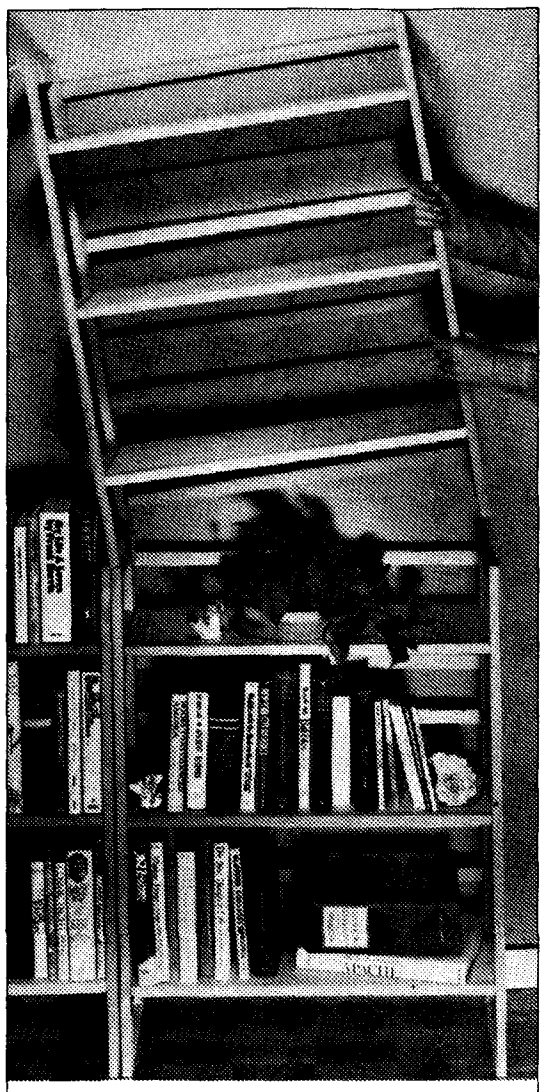

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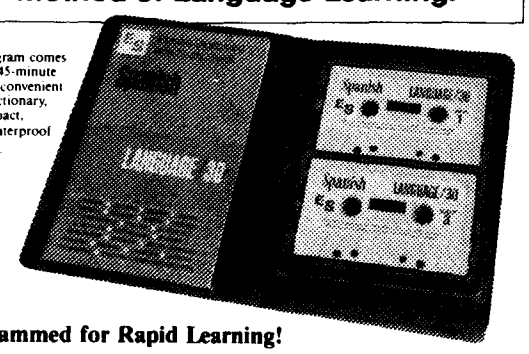

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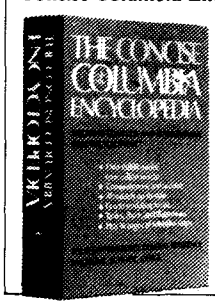

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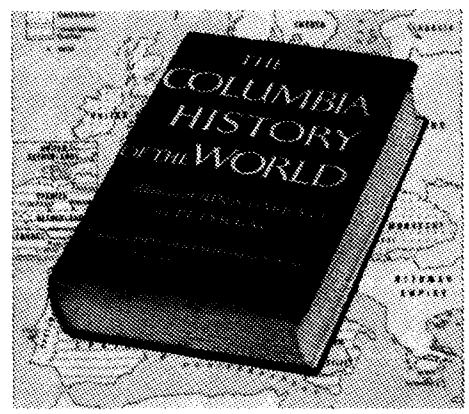

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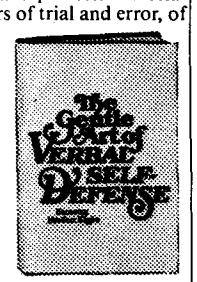

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THE PEACE CORPS REVIVAL

by Tory Stempf

For nearly twenty years, the Peace Corps was a vivid symbol of American (one can also read Democratic) virtue at work in the world. Yet by 1981 it was moribund. From its heyday in the mid-sixties, when some 15,000 volunteers traipsed around the globe doing good, things had soured in PC. Rumors of a CIA connection wouldn't go away. A few skittish countries with "nonaligned" reputations to uphold asked it to leave. Recruitment slumped. And the volunteers themselves changed: youthful idealism suddenly turned petulant.

In one particular fit of pique at President Nixon's Vietnam policy, employees commandeered the national headquarters in Lafayette Park. That was in May 1970. Later Nixon got even. He relegated PC to the bureaucratic catacombs of the agency ACTION. Employees started being tested for their political purity. Then, under Jimmy Carter, the liberals got in their lick. ACTION's Sam Brown accused PC's most successful education program of "cultural imperialism" and proceeded to gut it, so that by the time 1981 rolled around the corps was on the ropes—and with a new Republican administration coming in that everyone knew was itching to knock it out.

That was when the miracle happened. Peace Corps got up off the deck. As the thirty Silver Anniversary symposiums taking place around the country this year make clear, the corps has refound its purpose (if not its youth), reclaimed its agency independence, and upped its budget from $83.6 million in 1981 to $120 million, enabling it to field 6,000 volunteers (soon to go to 10,000) in sixty-three underdeveloped countries ("friends of America," the director calls them). What's more, PC has done all this with the blessing of an administration by nature hostile to government-sponsored altruism. What happened?

Start with the director. Lorett Miller Ruppe, 47, a Miller Beer baroness and the wife of a six-term Michigan congressman, came on board a political pariah to the "California crowd" for being a George Bush devotee. Offsetting this taint, however, were her infighting savvy, connections, and political moxie. Peace Corps as laid-back—worse, guilty—liberalism, Ruppe knew, would never wash with this image-conscious President. It would have to be brought into the Republican eighties, given a Brooks Brothers suit and a Wall Street sensibility. And that's what she did, selling it as effective, professional (specialists being preferred over liberal arts "generalists"), and a good buy to boot—just $20,000 supports a PCV overseas for a year, compared to $100,000 for a USAID employee. But above all she hawked it as the personification of the reassertive—yes, interventionist—America Mr. Reagan himself extolled. Peace Corps would stand up there with the Sixth Fleet in the Gulf of Sidra as an "image of America" (her words) that would replace "Dynasty" and "Miami Vice" (her examples) in the eyes of the world.

After this, outflanking her conservative critics was easy. Ruppe simply harked back to what had been the chief rationale behind the corps in the first place: what Hubert Humphrey called its role "to combat the virus of Communist totalitarianism" in the developing nations. In the early days PC training had included, by congressional mandate, a mini-course on the theory and practice of Communism in the Third World. This training (termed "absolutely, totally bullshit" by Carter's deputy director, Richard Sykes) was discontinued in the seventies. Mrs. Ruppe reinstituted a slicker "audio-visual" version of the old lecture course, satisfying enough cold warriors that naive trainees were once more being duly awakened to the Soviet threat. At the same time she got President Reagan to abolish political testing for selection of overseas staff. The old *ésprit de corps* returned, and so did the recruits.

But Mrs. Ruppe didn't raise the dead all by herself. A self-conscious diaspora of over 120,000 former Peace Corps volunteers (RPCVs) has resettled, often uneasily, into American life. Bitten by the Third World bug and habituated early in life to the taste for power, they've gravitated in disproportionately large numbers to jobs like teaching and international consulting, and to politics. Five are now congressmen, two are U.S. senators, 500 work for AID and 250 as congressional aides. RPCVs gravitate toward, and tend to dominate, human rights organizations like Amnesty International and relief agencies like Catholic Relief Services, CARE, and Oxfam. And they have organized. According to the National Council of RPCVs, more than fifty private groups around the country today actively pursue what has always been the most problematic of PC's goals: "to educate Americans about the Third World." Toward this goal, the Carnegie Corporation and AID gave the council $80,000 to design a high-school course on the problems of Third World development. A Peace Corps Institute, seeded by the World Bank, was founded by PC's director under Carter, Richard Celeste (now governor of Ohio). And to keep the diaspora's collective spirit up, a new magazine for ex-PCVs is in the works—*Third World*—thanks to market research contributed by the Ford Foundation.

What sort of special insights into world affairs do RPCVs discover and then share with the American public? By the New Left's reckoning, the corps was too entwined with the "established power structure" to have any real educative value—PCVs didn't "go native" enough—but most observers saw otherwise: what a two-year stint amidst grinding poverty did to young, middle-class, impressionable souls. Indeed, twenty years later the Chicago RPCV group finds these attitudes still "universal" among ex-volunteers: "a continuing sense of connection with one's host country"; "the American indifference to the PC experience"; "a sense of being caught between two worlds"; "feelings of empowerment . . . beyond what we could have expected in our own culture . . ."; the "mutual ignorance between the Third World and the USA"; and "a widespread feeling of unresolved personal and PC-related experiences and problems."

Whether because of emotional predisposition or the tour of duty itself (or both), few PCVs returned to the States with what could be called a prideful attitude toward American culture and politics. Life here seemed superficial, and for the struggling peoples they had left behind and come to identify with, dangerously complacent and ignorant. Western freedom and democratic

Tory Stempf is a writer living in Seattle.

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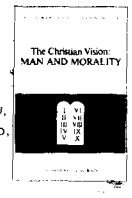

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values in particular began looking abstract, even chimerical, in the spotlight of worldwide human want—of little use to people without the economic strength to use them. PCVs acquired, in their own words, "a sense of the dispossessed" that often as not found the United States "on the wrong side of social change" in the world. It was a moral perspective redolent of liberation theology and bowdlerized Marxism. No wonder, then, that many RPCV groups today "work for peace and disarmament" with organizations like Ploughshares and Peace Offensive; support the sanctuary movement; lobby against U.S. policy in Central America and send "peace planes" to Nicaragua. "It is not necessary to support dictators and racist regimes in South Africa, Central America, and Asia," is the way a New York group articulates its political worldview. Former volunteer and author Paul Cowan didn't beat around the bush. He wrote that the PC experience was "the making of an un-American."

So we arrive in this 25th year at a delicious irony. Republican Ruppe and the legions of ex-vols she caters to are at cross purposes. It's an awkward *pas de deux* indeed. Today's Peace Corps, with its stump-thumping patriotism and glitter, embodies what every RPCV I've ever talked to despises. For as much as Mrs. Ruppe talks (and she talks a lot, and well) about the importance of "people-to-people" contacts and an interlocking "global village" of nations great and small, her muscular Iacocca-like style is really about the exercise of power, the sort of power that makes all this magnanimity possible. And it taps an altogether different American feeling, namely the one that believes it's high time the rest of the world started learning from *us*.

For her part, Mrs. Ruppe seems oblivious to these ideological tensions. RPCVs privately express their qualms, but publicly (so far) swallow their aversion to Mrs. Ruppe's boss for the greater good of the corps. Maybe it's because they know they have the last say. After all, 6,000—10,000!—PCVs today means 6,000 more transformers of American culture tomorrow, long after Mrs. Ruppe and Mr. Reagan and their vision of America are gone. □

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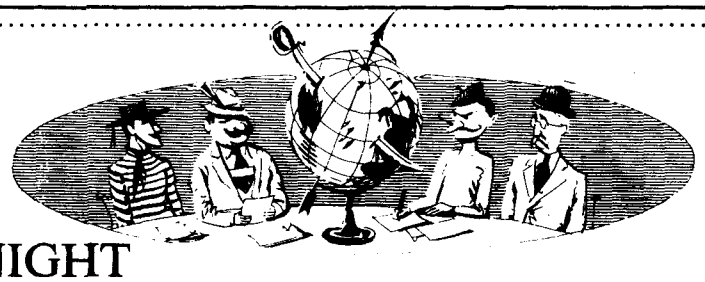

DREAMS BEFORE MIDNIGHT

by Herb Greer

In late summer the British were lulled and then infuriated by two different echoes of the same imperial dream. The sedative was Prince Andrew's wedding to Sarah Ferguson, cheered in the center of London by massed crowds of many nationalities. The *Times* called this a piece of "pure theatre," which is exactly what it was: a pageant of ritual splendor comfortably recalling the golden days of Britain's pride as a world power.

Elsewhere the ex-imperial images were uglier. In Harare a sweating *décoiffé* British diplomat appeared on television pressing a begging note into the hands of Robert Mugabe, pleading with him and his fellow African autocrats not to boycott the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh. The diplomat and his note were treated with insolent contempt; the boycott was duly imposed, not only by Mugabe, but by about half of the Commonwealth and most of the dictators which infest it.

Almost at the same time British viewers were treated to the sight of their foreign secretary in Lusaka, listening with bowed head to a disingenuous lecture on human rights and racism from Zambia's president-for-life, Kenneth Kaunda. This petty despot, whose "African Socialism" has ruined his own country, was demanding that Britain take up its old imperial role—but only toward South Africa.

It was not Mugabe's contempt, nor Kaunda's insulting remarks on Britain and its prime minister, that upset the British public; they, along with the Labour party and SDP-Liberal Alliance (and some "wet" Tories), were making much the same demand as Kaunda, calling for punitive sanctions against the Boer autarchs on the Cape of Good Hope. The cause of popular anger in Britain was Mrs. Thatcher's refusal to accede to the sanctions demand.

The British were well informed about the consequences of punitive sanctions: destruction of jobs in Britain; mass unemployment for blacks in South Africa; starvation of refugee children in the South African "homelands"; and almost certainly increased bloodshed which would further envenom the tortured politics of South Africa. They knew also that the largest black group in South Africa, Gatsha Buthelezi's Zulus, opposed sanctions. But for the British public, for Labour and the Alliance, and for the Commonwealth, these details were eclipsed by the imperative for a Grand Imperial gesture. The suffering and dying, after all, would be far away and in another country. At home the British Parliament and public would be able to congratulate themselves on their virtue. Most of all, they could feel that their country was a sort of great power again, leading the Commonwealth into action against *somebody* and counting for something in the world. The attention paid by Mrs. Thatcher to consequences, and her stubborn resistance therefore to sanctions, were taking all this away from the frustrated Britons, and she was being vilified for it.

Something remarkably similar had happened to Winston Churchill during the Second World War—an abuse of mirage politics and utopian afflatus by his opponents inside and outside the coalition government. This set the course for Churchill's massive electoral defeat after the war, and for Britain's excursion into the swamp of welfare state extravagance, economic anemia, and industrial disaster. That wartime story is told by the British historian Corelli Barnett in *The Audit of War*, published in Britain by Macmillan earlier this year.

> [This book] is based on a thorough trawling of the files of cabinet committees and wartime production ministries dealing with such questions as technical inefficiency, slacking, trade-union restrictive practices, and incompetent management in industries ranging from . . . coal and shipbuilding to advanced technologies like aircraft, radar, and machine tools; and also [on] the files of various committees on different aspects of post-war reconstruction, from social security to exports, employment, and regional policy.[1]

This book utterly destroys the myth of a united, tough, ingenious people working shoulder to shoulder in the face of Hitler's threat. It shows an American reader that Edward R. Murrow's famous account of the Blitz, with those plucky Londoners who "could take it," was a shallow and finally false image of Britain as it really fought the war on the home front. Remorselessly, piling chapter and verse into mountains of damning detail, Barnett reveals a

Herb Greer is an American writer and playwright living in England.

[1]From a letter by Barnett to the *Times Literary Supplement*, answering an obtuse and question-begging review by Robert Skidelsky.

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panorama of indifferent, greedy, shiftless, complacent, and above all incredibly stupid workers and management, for whom the deadly peril of their nation took second place (when it took any place at all) to class hostility and the chance of massive featherbedding, plain skiving, and a pattern of industrial blackmail by unions which exploited the war to wipe out the connection between wages and productivity. It is Barnett's thesis that these war years created the conditions for what in the postwar decades would be called the British disease.

Even before the war inefficiency, waste, and a general sloppiness of thought and organization in industry had seriously impaired Britain's ability to fight, and by 1941 the country was bankrupt. It was saved first by a loan from the Belgian government-in-exile (!) and then by timely and generous American aid, which prevented the collapse of Britain as an industrial power and an ally. Despite the aid and the parlous state of Britain, management in the basic industries continued to show a complacency that verged on the incredible. While a beleaguered government continued to subsidize rising wages, productivity in the coal industry declined throughout the war. Workers and management in a shipbuilding industry described by Barnett as "medieval" *resisted* greater efficiency at a time when U-boat destruction of British shipping was threatening the country's very survival. Wages padded by subsidy into mass bribery never dissuaded trade unions to abandon their sulky and obstructive behavior. Throughout the war they remained obstinately unwilling to accept any improvements that might increase profits for "the bosses."

At the same time the coalition government was divided over what the people of Britain should be promised after the war. Churchill, who (rather naively, it seems) trusted the British to fight against Nazism in any case, was cautious about such promises. He and his cabinet, especially Chancellor of the Exchequer Sir Kingsley Wood, felt that it would be wrong to commit the nation to postwar spending it could not afford. Others, such as Sir William Beveridge and Ernest Bevin, had different ideas both about the British people and about the postwar commitment. They did not believe that the British could be trusted to fight Hitler without the inducement of a future "New Jerusalem."[2] Not to put too fine a point on it, they did not think that Britain's people would stand up against Nazism unless they were bribed to do it. The bribe was eventually codified in the famous Beveridge Report, which sketched out the blueprint for a postwar welfare state.

Beveridge and his acolytes asserted that the cost of their vision, which would be vast, could be met by "full employment" in postwar British industry, working as in wartime for a national purpose. They cited the achievements in wartime aircraft production and radar as proof that this was possible. But the British, who were industrial cripples even before the war, never matched the productivity of their future peacetime competitors—not even that of the Germans, which was hamstrung by Nazi administrative chaos. The vaunted new technology had been heavily dependent on outside help, especially from America, that would not be forthcoming after the war.

Brushing aside the prudence of Churchill and Kingsley Wood, Beveridge and the "New Jerusalemers" went to the media—primarily *Picture Post* (the British equivalent of *Life*) and the BBC, both of which obligingly hawked glassy-eyed propaganda about the glowing postwar paradise. Thus suckered, the public responded with such enthusiasm that the coalition government, against the scruples of Churchill and his supporters, was swept into a commitment to the New Jerusalem, including a gigantic housing program that would supersede construction of vitally needed new industrial plant. While Britain's electorate respected Churchill for his war leadership, they did not believe that he and his Tory party would deliver the New Jerusalem. This was a major contribution to the Labour landslide in July 1945.

Outside the covers of Barnett's book his terrible story has continued in full spate. After the American life-support machine was withdrawn in the late 1940s, Britain's only substitute was debt and demagogic hot air. Through the falling away of empire and the decline of British industry, the British never adapted their New Jerusalem expectations to fit their miserable performance in the creation of wealth. On the contrary, welfare state demands swelled up; elections became potlatch rituals, vying with promises the country could not afford, plus empty rhetoric like Wilson's hailing of a new technological age in the 1960s. The country's ability to pay was further curtailed by government deferral to trade unions and their wartime ritual, inexorably continued in peacetime, of continual pay increases without matching productivity. It was not until the 1980s that the government of Mrs. Thatcher made a serious effort to control trade unions and cut away the dead flesh in coal and steel and other outdated industries.

The prime minister's refusal to resume the potlatch game, like her resistance to pressure for gesture-politics over South Africa, has led to determined efforts to blacken her in the eyes of the public. Because of her reluctance to match public spending to swollen expectations, she has been accused of "wrecking" the National Health Service, of "ruining" education, and of generally behaving in a heartless manner. By playing on illusions of a bottomless government purse, her opponents have managed to destroy any rudimentary sense of economic process that the electorate might have had. The true heirs of the wartime visionaries of New Jerusalem, the left-plunging Labour party under Neil Kinnock, has now laid out a public spending extravaganza of more than £26 billion (a treasury costing says upwards of £35 billion) in promises, most of which is to be financed by debt. Playing on welfare-state hostility to Mrs. Thatcher, this has helped to push Labour's popularity to more than 40 percent in the public opinion polls—almost ten points above the Tories.

The inclination to Labour shows a renewed appetite for the politics of extravagance and fantasy, which do not stop at the chimeras of welfare-state spending. They include quasi-imperial gestures to satisfy that papier-mâché dummy of a lost empire which is called the Commonwealth; also a promised "independence" from the United States through the removal of American forces and bases from these islands, as part of a Labour foreign policy that is ever more pro-Soviet. Clearly there is a growing public distaste for Mrs. Thatcher's fight against the illusions which have been a staple of British life for more than forty years. She may prove to be a kind of British Akhenaton, the fourteenth-century pharaoh who tried to replace the old religion of Egypt with a new faith—and failed. □

[2]From a song with words by William Blake, about "building Jerusalem in England's green & pleasant land." The song is still a popular hymn in Britain.

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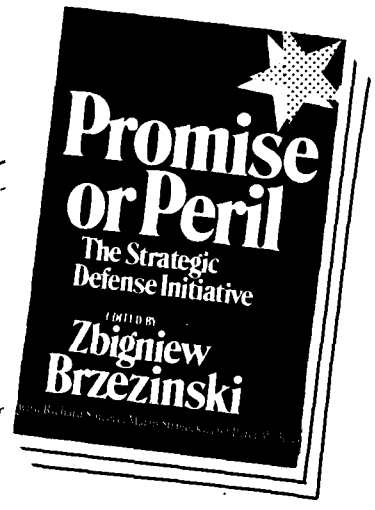

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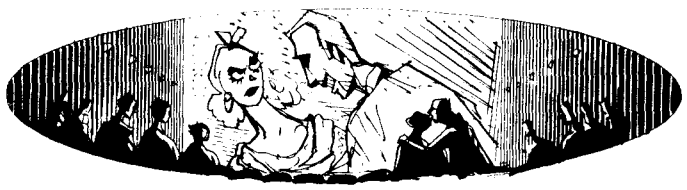


DECEPTIONS

by Bruce Bawer

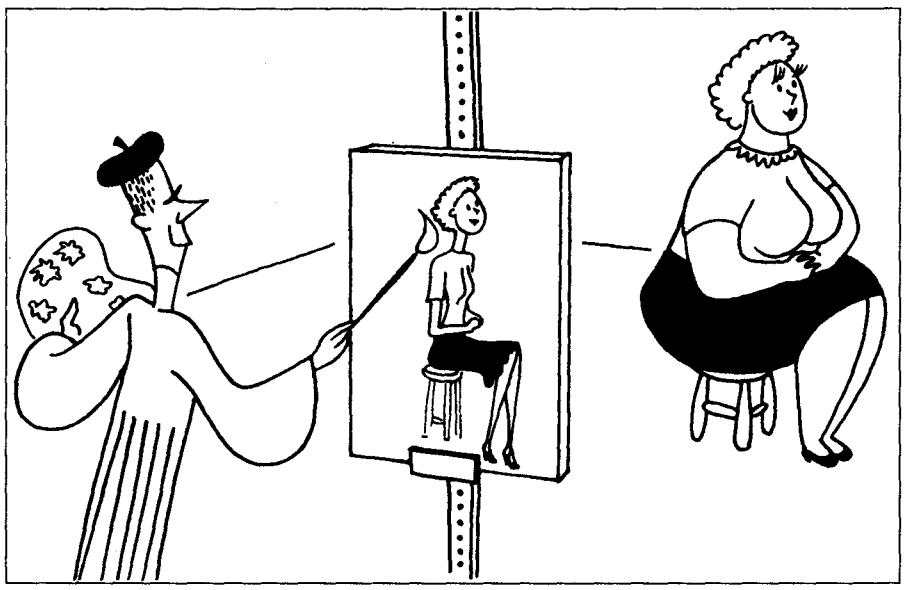
In *Mona Lisa*, the English writer-director Neil Jordan takes a conventional romantic-thriller formula and "classes it up"—spices the car chases with apocalyptic visions, hints at numerous layers of meaning beneath the absurd plot twists. The film (whose distinctive "look" consists of a cross between naturalistic grittiness and "Miami Vice"-style glitz) manifestly wishes to be regarded not only as an absorbing entertainment—which it is—but as a serious contemplation of love, loneliness, and the ubiquity of evil. In particular, like many another ambitious English film of this decade, *Mona Lisa* purports to probe the economic and moral decay of today's Britain, and apparently hopes that we will recognize in its pathetic but good-hearted protagonist—a middle-aged man named George, as in St. George the dragon killer—a symbol of the capacity for valor and virtue that postwar Britain has largely left behind.

When the film begins, George has just spent seven years in a mental institution and is trying to put his life back together. His wife having slammed the door in his face when he tried to return home, he seeks out Denny Mortwell (Michael Caine), an underworld kingpin who is his former employer (and who is apparently responsible, in some way, for his seven-year hiatus). Denny puts him to work as chauffeur for a high-priced call girl named Simone (Cathy Tyson). At first the two don't get along. George, who for all his seedy employment history looks down on prostitution, makes it clear to the exotic Simone that he resents having to work for a "tall thin black tart"; she, for her part, doesn't disguise her disdain for this vulgarian who drives a limo in a brown vinyl jacket, loud Hawaiian shirt, and olive polyester pants. When she tries to buy him some elegant togs, he is insulted, enraged—then touched; she's the first person who's done something nice for him in a long while. The hostility between them begins to evaporate; she shows him her unprepossessing little flat, opens up to him about her past ("I used to work that street," she confesses after an unnerving drive down a chippie-filled block); he asks questions: Do her customers ever fall for her? Her reply: "Sometimes they fall for what they think I am."

Soon she is turning to him for help. She asks him to find Cathy, a young friend of hers who's somewhere out on those raunchy streets. So George begins to haunt the peep shows and whorehouses. The grubbiness disturbs, obsesses him; in a porn-video store, he buys a tape of an X-rated film starring Simone and watches it at his friend Thomas's place. Thomas (Robbie Coltrane) is perplexed. "You used to be my hero, George," he says. "What's happened?" What's happened is that Simone and her fellow prostitutes have gotten to him; estranged from his wife, forced to meet his teenaged daughter covertly, and thrust into this world of adolescent girls who sell their bodies, he is—one gathers—simultaneously overcome with sexual excitement, moral revulsion, a tender, instinctive feeling of paternal protectiveness ("Father George," a young hooker calls him), and love for Simone.

Eventually it becomes clear to George that this sleazy turf is not as foreign to him as he had thought; as one false identity after another is stripped away, one hidden connection after another exposed, it develops that he, Simone, and Cathy are all pieces of a Kafkaesque puzzle, functionaries in a Pynchonesque empire run by Denny Mortwell. (Or so, at least, Mr. Jordan would have it; actually, these climactic reversals are more silly than surreal.) Ultimately, George acts heroically, virtuously, taking on a monstrous dragon, as it were, to save a beautiful princess; there is mounting tension, violence, death; and yet in the end it becomes clear that, far from striking a blow for innocence, he has, in all ignorance, been crusading on behalf of one sort of sleaziness against another. He has, we are to understand, made the mistake of falling not for Simone but for what he thought she was.

Which is, of course, where the film's title comes in. It's a rather clumsy one, referring both to the Da Vinci painting and to the Nat King Cole tune (which, in turn, also refers to the painting). Like the subject of the painting, Simone is a woman of mystery, a creature with an enigmatic smile; like the lady in the song, she may be either warm and real or (like the painting) unfeeling and artificial. (Both painting and song, by the way, are worked into the film.) In the manner of many a romantic thriller, then (*Charade, Blindfold, Vertigo,* and *Obsession* come to mind), *Mona Lisa* is about false appearances, about deception.



Yet—the title to the contrary—it is not the deceiver but the deceived, in this film, who is really at the center of our interest. Though Cathy Tyson manages to make Simone convincingly ambiguous, she is hardly as mesmerizing or mysterious as Jordan seems to think she is. Yet if we are more interested in George than in Simone it is less because of Tyson's deficiencies (it would, after all, take a Garbo to give this part everything it calls for) than because of Bob Hoskins's depth and intensity: he's simply so good an actor, so good at making credible both the violence and sweetness submerged beneath George's banal surface, that Tyson seems bland and one-dimensional by comparison. Robbie Coltrane, for his part, manages in his handful of scenes to turn his *ficelle* of a character into someone funny and touching, while Michael Caine is wasted as Denny—he isn't on screen very much, and his character is a shallow piece of business, the usual slimily elegant underworld bigshot. Indeed—despite its taut and witty script, its excellent pacing, and Hoskins's powerful acting—*Mona Lisa* is itself, in reality, a shallow piece of business; and Jordan's attempt to pass it off as something more is the film's ultimate deception.

Doris Dörrie's *Men* (*Männer*) is an uncommon treat. It's not only a German film comedy—a genre only a bit less obscure than the Mongolian Western—but a wonderfully funny one. Its protagonist is thirty-eight-year-old Julius Armbrust (Heiner Lauterbach), the smugly prosperous creative director of a packaging company, who, on the morning of his twelfth anniversary, is devastated to discover that his wife,

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Bruce Bawer is The American Spectator*'s movie reviewer and author of the new book,* The Middle Generation*, a study of four twentieth-century American poets (Archon Books).*

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Paula, has for the past three weeks been having an affair with a long-haired bohemian "artist." "Is he better than me in bed?" Julius asks desperately. He's had affairs too, but to him this is different: he can't help but feel that Paula's betrayal represents a judgment that he's failed as a man. Deciding to spend the summer away from home and job—and discovering that Paula's lover, Stefan Lachner (Uwe Ochsenknecht), is in the market for a roommate—Julius (under the pseudonym of Daniel) applies for the vacancy. So it is that he casts aside suit and tie, dons T-shirt and jeans, and becomes the tenement roommate of his wife's lover—who, it turns out, is not really an "artist" but a freelance illustrator of brassiere ads and a counterman at a fast-food place called "Heiss und Gut" (Hot and Good).

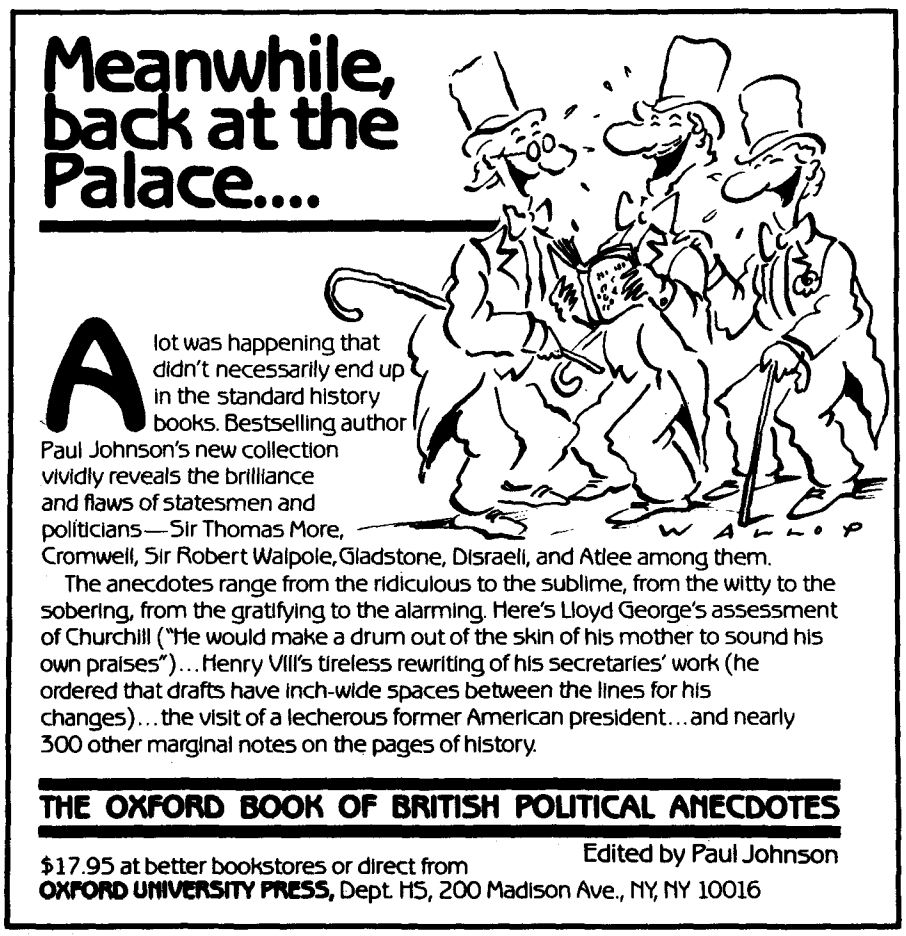
At first Julius is barely able to conceal his hostility toward Stefan; when, during a morning jog, he begins to flag and Stefan says, "Come on, can't you take it anymore?" Julius throws him to the ground and starts strangling him. "You're dangerous! Deranged! A real killer!" cries Stefan after fighting him off. But instead of dividing them, this incident brings them closer; for Stefan thinks that "Daniel" (who, according to Julius's fiction, has just been divorced, quit a lucrative job, and changed life-styles) is suffering a crisis of adjustment, and—being a very understanding sort—he sympathizes. They proceed to develop a tense but genuine friendship, their conversation consisting almost entirely of put-downs—and the more they criticize each other the closer they get. Stefan calls "Daniel" a moralist, accuses him of believing only in "money and power," and makes snide remarks about his credit cards; Julius, for his part, calls Stefan a "sponger," an "overgrown kid . . . lifeless, weak, boring, a failure. You live like you're fifteen years younger than you are. . . . You're proud of being a loser." When Stefan speaks of his love for Paula, Julius says, "Why did you fall for her? Because she lives in a world you'd like to belong to"; when Stefan confides that, in her heart, Paula still "clings to her husband," Julius explains that women like her "dream of glamorous adventure but with no risk. You know what that means? Money. What's it going to be tomorrow? Your toy car [Stefan plays with one] or her husband's Maserati?"

Gradually, "Daniel" persuades Stefan that the only way to get Paula to leave her husband for him is to find a job that pays as well as her husband's. Arranging an interview for Stefan with a friend's firm, Julius helps him select a suit, cuts his hair, teaches him how to behave on a job interview, edits his portfolio, and forces him to really *work* for the first time in his life. "I'll end up looking like her husband," Stefan objects—and that of course is precisely what Julius, a master of packaging psychology, wants.

Like *Mona Lisa, Men* is, in its own humorous way, concerned with deception—not only with Julius's deception of Stefan but, in a larger sense, with the roles men assume, the disguises they wear, to conceal their fear and pain (which explains the gorilla mask that figures prominently in the plot). "I wonder what your disguise is," Stefan says while they're doing laundry together, "the suit or the jeans." Julius replies, "Both." And indeed, for all their differences, deep down both men are essentially the same—they are, in Julius's words, "overgrown kids" whose childish jealousy, criticism, and betrayal of one another should not be taken too seriously. Stefan, for instance, continually sports a puerile pout and plays with his toy car (and, when he gets the big job, buys a real car identical to the toy); Julius (near the beginning of the film) trails Stefan on his kid's bike. They're antagonists, true enough; yet for all their antagonism, they're closer to each other than they could be to any woman, because they *understand* each other. At bottom, they're not rivals at all but allies in the battle of the sexes.

In its preoccupation with the theme of "male bonding," and its view of men as overgrown boys, *Men* seems very American; and Lauterbach and Ochsenknecht, in their characters' mutual devotion, distrust, and derision (as well as their exceptional chemistry), recall a host of American film teams: Abbott and Costello, Hope and Crosby, Martin and Lewis, Newman and Redford, Matthau and Lemmon in *The Odd Couple*, Curtis and Lemmon in *Some Like It Hot*. This American influence should not come as a surprise, for the thirty-one-year-old Dörrie spent several years in the United States, and claims to have found her sense of humor here. ("What I realized when I came back [to Germany]," she told *New York Times* reporter James Markham in a recent interview, "is that we Germans don't have a real feel for humor—or any sense of humor at all.") Yet the filmmakers who have most obviously influenced *Men*, interestingly, are not just Americans but German- and Austrian-Americans—Ernst Lubitsch, Billy Wilder.

On the whole, what makes *Men* stand out among contemporary German films is not just its humor but its apolitical humanity—it's not a feminist or Marxist treatise, not (thank God!) a critique of The System. From beginning to end, the film is fresh, acutely observant, and structurally elegant, building to its hilarious conclusion with a precision reminiscent, again, of *Some Like It Hot* or, more recently, *Tootsie*. Dörrie's touch is always light and sportive, her attitude toward Julius and Stefan consistently affectionate and empathetic. She does not jest at men in order to elevate women; on the contrary, if anybody in the film comes across less than sympathetically, it is Paula—partly because by the end of the movie she seems fickle and phony and easily manipulated, and partly because we simply spend less time with her than with her two men. In this, as in many other ways, *Men* is a surprising—and refreshing—departure from the current norm.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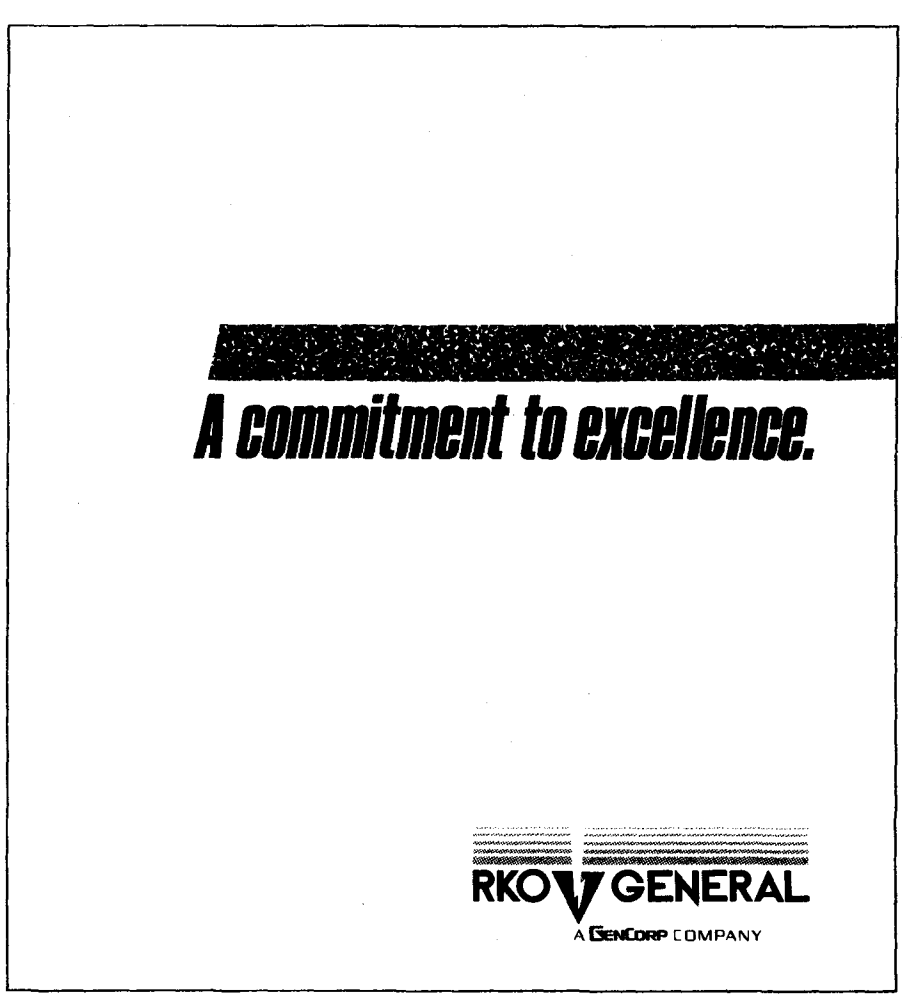

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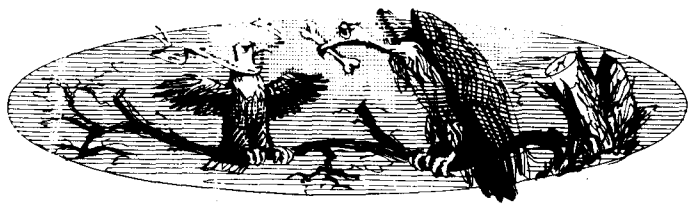

CROSSOVER CAUTION

by Lisa Schiffren

When the national Republican party went hunting for disaffected traditional Democrats to broaden its appeal last year, William Lucas, executive of Wayne County, Michigan, was undeniably the biggest game they snagged. That he is black was tremendously significant to a party which had just won an overwhelming national mandate from every sector except black voters, who went 91 percent for Walter Mondale.

But all politics is local, as the adage goes, and what the Michigan Republican party had to offer was a wide open shot at the governor's office. Despite a troubled primary, in which he nearly squandered an early lead as well as the patience of his backers, Lucas is now the GOP standard bearer against Governor James Blanchard.

It is well to remember that when Lucas explained his party switch, as so many have, by saying that his political ideas had remained essentially the same over time while the Democratic party had moved far to the left, he was telling the truth. Despite his ability to bring in votes, it had rejected him. In the two years before his switch Detroit's black Democratic establishment had denied Lucas prominence at events, podiums at party conventions, and a delegate slot at the 1984 national convention in San Francisco. His political future as a Democrat in the state was definitely blocked, which may have mitigated the riskiness in switching parties.

But as of September 11, Blanchard, affectionately known as the "Boy Guv" because of his squeaky voice and wimpy mannerisms, held a 55-27 lead, with the undecided 18 percent leaning toward him, according to a *Detroit News* poll.

Now it may be that no one can beat a popular incumbent with a 73 percent approval rating in an economic upswing. It may be that the electorate is apprehensive about this new hybrid, a black Republican—blacks because he is a Republican, whites because he is black. But it also may be more personal: Bill Lucas has not yet demonstrated the will to win, the proverbial "fire in the belly." He hasn't etched a clear, hard impression of what he stands for in the electorate's mind. And, he has failed to offer an alternative philosophical position on the issues which might galvanize the public.

In order to capture the electorate Lucas would have to show that there is some significant difference between the candidates. And yet, facing a pillar of the budding neoliberal network, he has deliberately steered away from defining a clear conservative position. This is partly a strategy designed to avoid commitment, especially on issues where prospective supporters, urban blacks and rural white conservatives, would disagree. More important is that, despite his apparently sincere admiration for Ronald Reagan, as well as some new rhetorical accessories acquired from the Republicans, he is not really comfortable with most "conservative" positions.

The facet of Reaganism that Lucas is most comfortable with is the personal. He has concentrated on telling the public his own fairly inspirational rags-to-riches story, emphasizing that this American Dream he embodies is accessible to all who strive for it. His version is completed by a tremendously wholesome family—he has five kids, most of them doctors. And he is a regular (Catholic) churchgoer. Indeed, Lucas could easily be one of Reagan's American heroes.

In person, Bill Lucas is extremely dignified and courteous. He is soft-spoken, has a warm smile, and exudes decency, sincerity, competence, and a great sense of personal discipline—all of which, by most accounts, is the real thing. This dignity has caused former competitors to accuse him of having a Teflon quality of his own, as his evasion of details has not hurt in previous campaigns.

Unfortunately, Lucas's campaign slogan, "I will be judged on the strength of my character, not by the color of my skin" (paraphrased by one disappointed supporter as "Vote for me because I'm a nice Negro") misses the point entirely. Admirable as his character truly is, it isn't—and shouldn't be—much more of a voting issue than his race. Blanchard, as his main campaign theme, is claiming credit for Michigan's "comeback" from the recession of 1981-82, which cut deeper in the rustbelt than most places. Lucas claims that the upswing, such as it is, was caused by Reagan's economic policies and happened despite Blanchard's 38 percent tax increase—a statement the voters appear to believe.

In a state which boasts some of the highest average property taxes in the nation, the issue of cutting them radically is a natural. But Lucas has been reluctant to sound this theme, though the issue has broad appeal. (Blanchard has proposed a sham reform.) Rather, his green-eyeshade tendencies take hold and he worries aloud about how to "pay for" such a cut. With four weeks to go, amidst increasingly vocal skepticism from conservative critics, the newly reinforced Lucas campaign staff released a plan to cap property taxes constitutionally, which would effectively cut them. It remains to be seen how much emphasis this plank will get. As for drastic state income tax cuts, Lucas has promised a cut only .2 percent larger than Blanchard's.

Michigan also has the highest welfare benefits in the region—and a correspondingly high population of inter-generational welfare cases who have turned Detroit into a breeding ground for every social pathology known to man. But Lucas has not dared suggest any overhauling of the benefits programs. At best, he promises to scrutinize the Department of Social Services staffing and accounts, and to come up with a workfare program better than the pilot Blanchard already has in place. This is a pity, because the black middle class is even more concerned with the havoc wreaked by welfare in the cities than the white middle class is.

(continued on page 54)

Lisa Schiffren is an editorial writer for the Detroit News.

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE CAPITALIST REVOLUTION: FIFTY PROPOSITIONS ABOUT PROSPERITY, EQUALITY, AND LIBERTY

Peter Berger/Basic Books/$17.95

Michael Novak

An old tale from the Tatra mountains, whence my grandparents came to America, tells of two chicken thieves who, hearing the farm door slam, hid in the henhouse. When the farmer cocked his rifle at the door, one of them in terror clucked: "Ain't nobody here but us chickens."

So powerful is the argument of Peter Berger in *The Capitalist Revolution* that America's "democratic socialists" are likely to deny from the henhouse that they are now, or ever have been, serious socialists. "I know of no major American economist or intellectual, for example, who has called for government ownership of the means of production in the last 40 years," writes Lester Thurow, reviewing *The Capitalist Revolution* in the *New York Times Book Review* (September 7)—except, he says, John Kenneth Galbraith, in a limited case, and "no one took him seriously."

There are three interesting characteristics of the leading socialist writers of the U.S. The top ten among them generally get to review one another's books in the *New York Times* and the *New York Review of (Each Other's) Books.* Michael Harrington, Robert Lekachman, Michael Walzer, Irving Howe, Robert Heilbroner, Robert Solow, John Kenneth Galbraith, Richard Barnet, Gar Alperowitz, and Lester Thurow take turns praising one another's intellectual stature—and then will also review in the same journals the works of anyone else who dares to enter the field. They have had a monopoly.

Their second characteristic is that, being unaccustomed to anything but adulation, they do not take kindly to a challenge. Third, taking pains outside New York and Boston to hide their socialism, they often prefer to be designated as "liberals" (which they certainly are not). Thus, it is sometimes publicly unclear whether they are, in fact, democratic capitalists in principle (who merely prefer higher taxes and broader political controls over economic decisions) or, rather, true democratic socialists, who for tactical reasons sometimes deny it.

Peter Berger's new book arrays such massive empirical evidence against the beliefs of socialists, however, that some new strategy has become necessary.

Against his arguments, one may predict that socialists will deny that there are any socialists among American intellectuals. ("Today intellectuals are more interested in making a lot of money working for capitalists than they are in overthrowing capitalism," Thurow writes.) One may predict that they will also change the subject. "The major critique one can make of Mr. Berger's book is that it avoids the real issues," Thurow writes, employing the same evasive tactics Robert Solow took in the *New Republic.* "It may not have been his 'present concern to unscramble "good" and "bad" forms of state intervention,' but that, and not the rightness of capitalism, is the real issue." Thurow thereby concedes the "rightness" of capitalism. That is a massive concession. The game is over.

The context in which Peter Berger writes is global and world-historical. He is, in effect, asking the elites of the planet's 165 or so nations to examine the empirical basis for deciding what sort of economic system to choose. In modern conditions (large populations, international interdependence), there are no more than two choices: either an economy based *predominantly* upon markets or a command economy based *predominantly* upon political allocation. (The two "pure" theoretical cases are nowhere to be found among the world's nations, yesterday or today. In the real world, one must be satisfied with "predominantly.") It takes no sweat to discern that Belgium, by this standard, is "capitalist" and Bulgaria "socialist." That there may be a few close calls is normal. At what point will Sweden (described by its own socialists as "capitalist") pass over into the paradise of socialism? At the loss of which hair does a man become bald?

Clearly, Lester Thurow needed to shift Berger's definition from "predominantly political allocation" to "nationalization." Berger's argument is far more finely grained. Every existing capitalist nation indulges in a high degree of political allocation, since each capitalist economy is embedded in social, political, and moral systems that represent not only "economy" but also "political economy." The decisive definitional point is the "predominantly market economy."

In fact, Berger's purpose is to develop a theoretical model for discussing economic systems within the social sciences beyond anything available in Max Weber, Joseph Schumpeter, F.A. Hayek, or any other social scientists (including the nonscientist Karl Marx). This is a large, and worthy, ambition. Accordingly, his first step is to define capitalism and socialism neutrally. His second is to separate all the strands of argument that have been woven together in historical debates on the subject, in order to isolate the associated empirical claims. He then re-states each of these strands in the form of a proposition subject to empirical falsification.

Berger does not claim that the fifty strands he himself separates are the *only* strands. He does not even claim that he has stated them exactly. Anyone is free to add to them or to re-formulate them. What, after Berger, no one will be free to do is to evade empirical tests concerning assertions about capitalism and socialism.

Berger has chosen his own formulations rather carefully, as his discussion following each of his fifty "hypotheses" makes clear. Any suggested reformulation will have to be at least equally careful. Every word has its assigned meaning and sweep. (An ambiguous word such as "optimal" has its locally assigned context, criteria, and range.) This is useful to state, because incautious reviewers have already played fast and loose with his definitions.

Berger defines capitalism consensually: *production for a market by enterprising individuals or combines with the purpose of making a profit.* This definition distinguishes capitalism from traditional economic orders (feudalism, etc.) and from socialism. It encapsulates Marx, Sombart, Weber, Schumpeter, and the others. It also matches common sense. Next, he "disaggregates" capitalism from many of the other forces that have accompanied it historically, but that may or may not be intrinsic to it: the amelioration of the historical lot of the poor, technological progress, modernization, individual autonomy, and democracy. Clearly, capitalism is "related" to such

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things. But the character of such relations must be specified empirically.

Architecturally, Berger's design emerges from two considerations. First, the relation of capitalism to five main themes (set forth below) must be untangled in appropriate sets of empirical propositions. This requires chapters two through six. Second, two highly significant bodies of information, newly available in the years since World War II, need to be assessed. Thus, chapter seven is given to the capitalism of East Asia, in some ways quite different from Western capitalism but empirically decisive in several respects (in falsifying "dependency theory," for example). And chapter eight is given to the "control case," an empirical survey of Industrial Socialism; i.e., those nations designed upon socialist principles.

Chapter nine is given over to the asymmetry between theories of capitalism and theories of socialism. Capitalist theory, in Berger's view, is not and cannot be mythical; it can only be empirical, for the economic system is conceived of solely as a means, not as an end. By contrast, socialist theories have historically been (and are intrinsically) mythical. They cannot be falsified by fact. They are holistic and fantasize an entire way of life, ends and means together. This is shown by the propensity of socialists, faced with the failure of socialist predictions, not to abandon the theory but, instead, to go looking for some other case in which such predictions may yet (somehow) turn out to be true.

Berger understands socialist thinking quite well. For nearly a decade beginning in the mid-1960s, he was not only open to socialist theories but leaned heavily in the direction of affirming their humane possibilities, as he did in *Pyramids of Sacrifice*. Berger's Kronstadt, so to speak, sprang from his encounters with East Asia beginning in the mid-1970s. When he saw his earlier hypotheses falsified, he had to abandon socialist theory. He has learned, the hard way, not to expect most socialist intellectuals similarly to pursue disconfirming evidence. (The reaction to his book by socialist writers will add a great deal of evidence on this question.)

Berger's tenth and last chapter allows him to put to use the fifty empirical strands he has brought together in the eight preceding discursive chapters. He invites social scientists to test his fifty hypotheses, to winnow them or to expand them, to reformulate them or to amend them, above all to decide empirically which are to fall and which are to stand, according to accumulated evidence. This first use will give us an empirically founded description of capitalism as it actually exists.

The second use is to elicit a set of social and moral values in whose light capitalism as an economic system is to be judged. Berger lists seven such values, commonly employed by social thinkers: the material well-being of the poor; equality; political liberties and democracy; the protection of human rights (both civil and social-economic); individual autonomy; the preservation of tradition; and community.

In the light of some of these values, the empirical picture of capitalist economies earlier arrived at compares favorably with the empirical picture of socialism. In the light of others, there seems to be little difference. In the light of some (community, for example) socialist *movements* seem to do better, although socialist *regimes* once established do worse.

The empirical picture of capitalist as against socialist economies does not predetermine one's options either for or against capitalism. That depends upon one's higher values. But one can hardly make an informed assessment without that empirical picture. Berger's great achievement is to place future debate within that framework.

In this respect, his seventh and eighth

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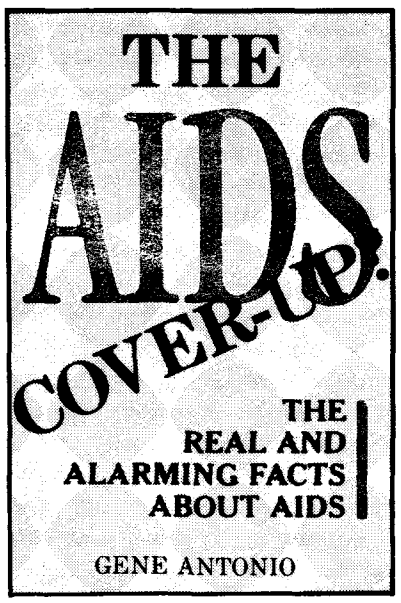

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chapters (on East Asia and on Industrial Socialism) are especially important. They oblige the reader to take a global view and to confront evidence that has seldom been brought together and set forth so compactly. Some years ago, Berger assembled a team of first-rate scholars to bring together the necessary evidence (then diffused in far-flung professional journals in various fields). The essays he then collected will soon be published by the University Press of America in two volumes, *Capitalism and Equality in America: Modern Capitalism*, vol. I, and *Capitalism and Equality in the Third World: Modern Capitalism*, vol. II. It is this vast body of evidentiary material that Berger here draws upon with economy and clarity.

Nonetheless, it is in chapters two through six that most of the meat of *The Capitalist Revolution* is to be found. These chapters deal, respectively, with raising up the poor; class and social mobility; political liberties; personal liberation; and international development. In each chapter, Berger distinguishes between the effects of capitalism and those of modernization.

Thus, modern factories, whether in socialist or in capitalist systems, share some characteristics. Modern technologies, whether in socialist or capitalist lands, permit certain great gains in productive power. Modern engineering, wheresoever practiced, disciplines the human mind to habits of order and precision. His earlier work having prepared him thoroughly for discussing modernization, Berger is here able to make systematic distinctions that have escaped most others. From the point of view of pure social science, Berger's greatest contribution may be the power and range of his distinction between capitalism and modernization.

Just the same, three things about this powerful book leave me unsatisfied. Berger's achievements are so colossal that one wishes he could have done everything instantly and completely. There is, alas, much more to do. To be sure, Berger has promised no more than an "outline" of a theory, a skeleton in need of flesh and blood. Understandably, weariness overcame him at the end. His last few pages are disappointing. He has not yet thought out clearly what the next questions are. That is one source of dissatisfaction.

The second runs deeper. Early on, Berger observes that in the real world capitalism is never found naked and alone, but always embedded in a political system and a moral system. His own systematic purposes oblige him to abstract capitalism from such concrete settings. Much of the strength of his argument derives from such abstraction. But the price to be paid comes due in chapter nine. There Berger is able to show easily the power of the socialist myth, undaunted by the evidence of fact. He is also able to show that most citizens of capitalist countries welcome capitalism as a fact, but do not invest it with mythic content. Capitalism is not the sort of thing for which one gives three cheers. It is simply workable—it works, it's there. Capitalism, he says, legitimates itself by its facticity. A natural system, it needs no extraneous myth.

At this point, Berger sells his own viewpoint a trifle short. One of Berger's virtues is to maintain a sharp, quizzical, noncommittal standpoint—and a quick sense of the comic. While he introduces the concept of "economic culture" in chapter one, in order to show how his own approach will differ from a merely economic approach, he never fully exploits the idea. Think of it this way. The four main ingredients of a capitalist economy, in Berger's definition, are markets, enterprise, profit, and (implicitly) a transgenerational legal system establishing rights concerning property. But these four institutional arrangements also presuppose and inculcate certain habits and attitudes—a specific sort of culture. But how do such habits and attitudes compare with those inculcated by traditionalist (pre-capitalist) or socialist economies? What effects do capitalist institutions have upon virtues and character? What is the proper "culture of capitalism"?

Berger's method tends to take a too severely instrumentalist view of capitalism. For him, it is mostly a tool, a technique, a set of arrangements. He does not fully examine capitalism—despite his promise to do so—as an "economic culture." Since Daniel Bell in *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* makes a similar error, I suspect that there is some oversight in current sociological method that regularly leads it in this direction. For one thing, sociology proceeds from outside-in. It is based upon observation. Further, since sociological method requires sustained scrupulosity concerning values, it does not spontaneously proceed into an inquiry concerning moral habits. These it is likely to assign to the "cultural" or "moral" sphere, while it keeps its own social scientific eyes focused upon external institutions and arrangements.

But certain institutions are inconceivable without habits. For example, in illustrating the distinction between an "intrinsic" and an "extrinsic" relation, Berger early points out that "modern technology" and "a rational engineering mentality" are related intrinsically; one cannot imagine the first without the second. In the same way, one cannot imagine private property apart from habits of respect for law; markets without respect for free compacts mutually arrived at; enterprise without confidence in creative practical intellect; or the pursuit of profit apart from a willingness to sacrifice present consumption for investment in future gain. Not every ethos is supportive of such habits. Indeed, under socialism, all four sets of habits atrophy; and, under traditional regimes, both the general cultural ethos and the range of private virtues are quite different. "Economic culture" is a concept Berger needs to explore more deeply.

Thirdly, Berger places great—in my view, excessive—emphasis upon the emergence of the "autonomous individual" in capitalism. There are

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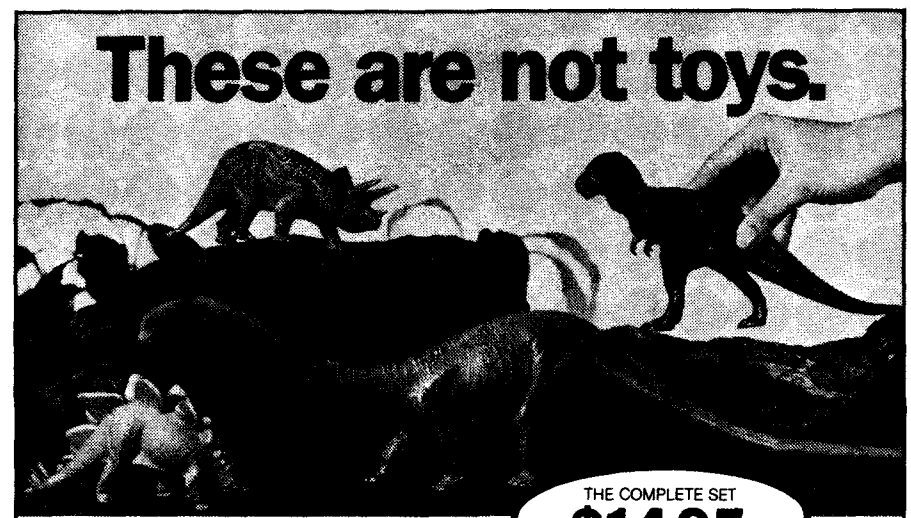

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sound reasons for some degree of such emphasis: the emergence of the individual in modern societies is both startlingly new and rich in significance.

Still, even in his definition of capitalism, the facts of the matter obliged Berger to add "combines" to his crucial phrase about "enterprising individuals." Entrepreneurs almost always construct new social institutions; they seldom act atomistically. Thus, a little reflection will show that what is most characteristic of capitalist action is its social nature. For one thing, a market is a social institution. More profoundly, no person of enterprise can succeed in isolation, atomically. Enterprise consists in establishing new relations with others: not only at the point of sale or in altering the process of production, but also in modifying the existing texture of laws, traditions, and tacit understandings in which heretofore socially unstructured aims and needs come to be known, identified, and met. Enterprise is constituted by alertness to new social possibilities in organization, production, or exchange.

The social texture of capitalism is far too much neglected in sociological literature, even though the literature of management bends under the weight of questions of human personality, motivation, and interaction. The new forms of human cooperation distinctive of capitalist societies—from teamwork to committees to associations of many sorts—generate powerful forms of sociality, not inferior in their way to the ancient *Gemeinschaft* and its pathologies. Let me propose thesis number 51: *Capitalist societies tend to generate modes of social cooperation qualitatively different from the forms of community found in traditionalist and socialist societies—more various, less total, more challenging, and of at least comparable affective satisfaction.*

Peter Berger's ambitious new work is of considerable theoretical significance. By separating ideological claims about capitalism and socialism from their empirical strands, and putting these to tests of falsifiability, he has already flushed several prominent American socialists out into the open. If they choose to defend socialism, they must put up or shut up. If they concede that the "rightness" of capitalism is no longer in question, their next move (in the socialist direction) will have to be to increase within it the number of decisions subject to political allocations rather than to markets. In the field of "political economy," they favor the "political." The operative noun, pain them as it might, is *capitalism.* Apparently, we are all capitalists now. □

RIGHT TURN: THE DECLINE OF THE DEMOCRATS AND THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN POLITICS

Thomas Ferguson and Joel Rogers/Hill & Wang/$19.95

Fred Barnes

Anybody who has worked for a newspaper knows the type. He (sometimes she) marches into the newsroom and asks to speak to a reporter. Got a great story for you, he says. Indeed the story sounds like a blockbuster—some tale of wrongdoing by the high-and-mighty, all done at the personal expense of the fellow who is telling about it. At some point, the reporter, shocked at his good fortune in having a big story fall in his lap, asks why the wronged person hasn't gone to court or to the authorities with his evidence. Can't get an honest lawyer, he snaps. In a flash, the reporter sees his Pulitzer Prize vanish, his chance to jump from general assignment drudgery to a major beat slip away. Why? The can't-get-an-honest-lawyer answer is a signal that the entire story, plausible as it sounded, is a paranoid fantasy.

I recalled this familiar newsroom experience when I got to the part of *Right Turn* that said the formula for catapulting the Democratic party back to full majority status is at hand. The formula consists of mobilizing the poor, women, minorities, etc., by dangling a program of full employment, enhanced power for labor unions, more unemployment compensation coverage, and "economic reform" in front of them. In other words, tilt left. But if this is such a sure-fire ticket to success, why don't Democrats try it? "The reason they do not do this is not because they do not know how, but because they do not want to," insist Ferguson and Rogers. "And they do not want to because such a mobilization would require that the people mobilized actually be offered something, and elite Democrats have very little that they want to give. While they would like to defeat the Republicans, they are not about to subsidize a broad popular coalition inimical to their own economic interests."

Yes, Democrats would rather remain out of power under current circumstances. That's the argument. Power is within their grasp, only they choose not to grasp it. The Democratic lament is: Stop me before I govern again. This must be a first in American politics, a party that won't take power. Rather than pursue a left-wing strategy that promises election victory, they have tugged their party to the right, and to welcome defeat. Not that the party rank-and-file are responsible. The elite corps of business leaders who Ferguson and Rogers insist run the party have done this. Worse, they have managed this feat of political re-positioning in defiance of public sentiment, which really hasn't shifted to the right at all in recent years. What America has undergone is a shift in elite opinion (to the right), but not a shift in mass opinion. Democratic leaders, to be precise, have led their party astray not by being too liberal, but by being too conservative.

Now, I grant that there is often a gap between elite and mass opinion. And it's true that the swing to the right in public opinion isn't quite what it has been cracked up to be. President Reagan, after all, is more conservative than the country, which explains why some of his policies (military aid to the Nicaraguan contras, cuts in education spending, a ban on abortions) don't muster majority support. But there *has* been a conservative swing in national opinion. Ferguson and Rogers undermine their own case for the contrary by citing the two most significant examples of the shift, the rise in support for increased military spending and the surge in opposition to tax hikes. On the strength of these turns in opinion, Reagan has pulled off the two overarching achievements of his presidency. One is the military buildup, the other the cut in tax rates.

Where Reagan's policies have gone beyond what the shift in opinion warranted, he's gotten into trouble. To make their case of policy outstripping opinion, the authors show that popular support for cuts in federal programs is lacking, then claim that Reagan has "dramatically slashed social-welfare programs." Hardly. For all his trying, the best Reagan has been able to do is eliminate the scandal-ridden CETA jobs program and revenue sharing, and trim at the margins of a few other programs such as food stamps and Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Nor have there been "major cuts" in Social Security, as Ferguson and Rogers assert. The only benefit that recipients lost was a single cost-of-living increase. Finally, the authors note correctly that popular backing for the military buildup was short-lived. What they don't mention, though they are surely aware of it, is that the buildup itself was also short-lived. By 1985, defense spending had stopped growing, public opinion once more carrying the day.

Of course, there is a lot more that Ferguson and Rogers either don't mention or don't explain. Their theory is that "investors" in political parties and candidates—mainly businessmen who contribute money—run politics in this country. The trouble is, there are so many exceptions to this rule that it crumbles altogether. To start with, how did Reagan get nominated by the Republican party in the first place? The nation's business elite wasn't backing him. Or how did Jimmy Carter get the Democratic nomination in 1976? The authors say Carter had "vast elite support," which would be news to Carter. Not only did he lack elite support in his campaign, but he was unable to garner much of it during his presidency. Then there is tax reform, which flies in the face of the investors theory. How in the world could it get the President's full-throated approval and pass Congress, transferring more than $100 billion in taxes from individuals to business, if the investors are in

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charge? It couldn't, and they aren't.

I'll have to admit that one thing about *Right Turn* left me completely puzzled. This is the matter of the Trilateral Commission. I had always thought the Trilateral business was solely a right-wing nut issue, but I guess I'm wrong. Ferguson and Rogers cite any politician's membership in the organization as telling evidence. But of what? They never say. Even the press is part of what appears to be a Trilateral conspiracy. Senator John Glenn of Ohio got away with posing as someone not beholden to "special interests" during the 1984 presidential race, they write. "And because he was a member of the Trilateral Commission—whose members received the most favorable press coverage of all candidates in 1976 and 1980—it was probably fated that much of the press would credit this claim during the vast buildup of his candidacy." Lot of good it did Glenn. He was, remember, the biggest flop of 1984.

On the other hand, the press was "openly hostile" in 1984 to the candidacy of George McGovern for the Democratic presidential nomination, according to Ferguson and Rogers. They need something to explain away McGovern's early departure from the campaign, despite his having offered up the left-wing agenda that the authors say is certain to inflame Democratic voters. Well, this explanation won't fly. I covered that campaign and I scarcely recall a hostile word being written or uttered about McGovern. I also didn't see Ferguson, a professor of government at the University of Texas, or Rogers, a professor of law at the University of Miami, on the campaign trail. McGovern may have suffered from benign neglect, but not hostility. "The mass media could with equal justification have hyped either McGovern or [Gary] Hart for their 'astonishing' showing in Iowa," they contend. Not quite. Hart finished well ahead of McGovern in the Iowa caucuses. He came in second and thus emerged as the obvious alternative to Walter Mondale.

Admittedly the press is fickle, but it couldn't have gotten away with touting McGovern over Hart. The assumption that it could have is one of many peculiarities of *Right Turn*. Another is the notion that Jesse Jackson's problem in the 1984 race was lack of money. Nope, his problem was that his candidacy didn't appeal to anyone except blacks, though he took the same Ferguson-Rogers line as McGovern. Still another strange idea is that the Christian fundamentalist revival in this country was created by money donated by "growers and independent oilmen in Texas, Oklahoma and California." Come on, this is preposterous. And still another is that there really was a secret Reagan plan in 1984 to raise taxes. For sure, David Stockman, the budget director at the time, wanted to raise taxes. But Reagan wouldn't go along, and still won't. If there was a plan, what happened to it? The authors are silent.

At some point in a book like this, you get tired of the relentless recitation of weird opinions and irrelevant facts. It's one thing to disagree with the foreign policy activity of the AFL-CIO, a peripheral function of the labor organization. It's another to declare the foreign role "suicidal" for the labor movement. I muddled through the AFL-CIO stuff, however. It was when I got to the outrage (this was page 135) over the growing backlog of cases at the National Labor Relations Board that I began to nod off. Think of it. The backlog of contested cases awaiting a decision by the board soared from 400 to 1,700 in Reagan's first term. But it could have been a lot worse. Imagine what the backlog might be if there were enough honest lawyers to go around. □

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HOW REAL IS THE FEDERAL DEFICIT?

Robert Eisner/The Free Press/$17.95

Franz M. Oppenheimer

Suppose he'd listened to the erudite committee,
He would have only found where not to look.

—W.H. Auden

On February 24, 1983, the flower of the American Establishment published a full page manifesto in the *New York Times* that came as close to the voice of a pope speaking *ex cathedra* as a secular society permits. Among the signers were seven former secretaries of the treasury, other former cabinet officers, chief executives of the largest American corporations, senior partners of the best known law firms, prominent bankers, and even economists. The language of the manifesto was extravagant: it spoke of crises and disaster and presented "A Program for Immediate Action" to avert economic catastrophe. The subject addressed was the federal budget deficit, past and predicted. The recession of 1982, the worst since the great depression, not yet over then, was partly attributed to a "loose budget"; high interest rates, stagnation in employment and capital growth, and general economic "havoc" were predicted unless "immediate action" to reduce the federal deficit was taken.

We now know that no such action was taken and that no havoc occurred. Yet politicians and the media continue in their attempts to persuade Americans that the federal deficit constitutes a grave, if not the gravest, threat to the security of the republic.

Professor Robert Eisner's new book shows why this conventional wisdom and past predictions of doom have been wrong. Since a voice crying in the wilderness is usually attributed to a charlatan, it is useful to establish Professor Eisner's sobriety before summarizing his findings. According to the book's jacket, "Robert Eisner is William R. Kenan Professor of Economics at Northwestern University. A Fellow of the Econometric Society and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, he has served as Vice President of the American Economic Association and President of the Midwest Economic Association and is on the editorial board of several major economic journals." He was also chairman of the economics department at Northwestern. In short, there is nothing queer about Eisner other than his views on the deficit.

Franz M. Oppenheimer, a frequent contributor, is a Washington lawyer. His article, "The Banking Revolution," appeared in the March 1985 American Spectator.

The first and most important thing we learn from him is that the federal deficit does not constitute a simple, concrete, and unquestionable fact. The deficits usually talked about result from only one way among several of presenting the national budget, and that may well be the least realistic and useful one.

Different ways of measuring and assessing deficits result in different figures. Professor Eisner mentions only in passing one major economic fact often overlooked: the impact of state and local governmental surpluses or deficits on the meaning of the federal deficit. For some time state and local governments have been accumulating surpluses; in 1984 and 1985 they amounted to about $60 billion a year. If those surpluses are deducted from the federal deficits during those years, no matter how the deficits are measured, they are reduced by about one-third. Clearly the way in which deficits and surpluses are distributed between federal and local governmental budgets makes little difference in how the deficits affect the economy.

Professor Eisner lays greater stress on the difference between current and capital outlays of the federal government which, "unlike private business and state and local governments, keeps no separate capital budget." Thus "when the federal government makes . . . capital expenditures of $77 billion, as it did in [fiscal year] 1984, that goes right into the deficit." Such bookkeeping makes little sense. Capital expenditures for highways, ports, housing construction, and post offices are made not for the fleeting moment but for years to come. During inflationary periods those investments increase in dollar value. If the total federal investment, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), of $171 billion in 1984 is deducted from the official deficit of $180 billion, the deficit would virtually disappear. Indeed, many profitable corporations would be in the red, if they followed the accounting methods used by the federal government. "The gross debt . . . of General Motors grew from $4.3 billion to $27.9 billion from 1970 to 1984," that of IBM from $2.6 billion to $16.3 billion during the same period.

The most original and significant change Professor Eisner proposes for the presentation of the federal budget involves proper accounting for the effects of inflation. He reminds us that there is a deficit only if there is an increase in debt. If the real value of debt, measured in constant dollars or purchasing power, is considered, nominal deficits may not only not increase the debt but actually decrease it. Thus, to quote Eisner:

> If we already owe $100,000 on a mortgage loan on our home and then borrow to spend $5,000 more than our income, our total debt of course rises to $105,000. But suppose, in the meantime, the value of a dollar has fallen by 10 percent because of inflation. That, in effect, cuts the real burden of our existing mortgage debt to $90,000 just as surely as if, without the inflation, we had somehow paid off $10,000. Did our total debt then, in meaningful economic terms, or in dollars of constant purchasing power, rise by $5,000 or fall by $5,000?

In short, our real debt declined, and we had a surplus, not a deficit.

The federal government has often been in a situation similar to that described in this illustration. Robert Eisner and his colleague Paul Pieper have constructed government balance sheets which show the market values (or estimated replacement costs) of all tangible and financial assets of the federal government as well as its liabilities. Those balance sheets show that the government's net worth increased from minus $12 billion in 1945 to plus $381.8 billion in 1980—without adjusting for inflation—but had decreased in 1984 to minus $58 billion. Thus two years after the manifesto of February 1983, and after nineteen years only seven of which had not shown an official deficit, the government's net worth had not materially changed: from minus $19.5 billion to minus $25.4 billion.

Essentially, according to Eisner, deficits must result in corresponding increases in the national debt. That debt is held in the form of government securities—bonds, notes, bills—most of which are in the hands of the public or of governmental entities, like the Social Security and employee pension funds that must invest their cash. Inflation reduces the real value of that debt burden in two ways: first, higher interest rates resulting from inflation reduce the market value of those securities, and, second, that reduced market value in turn is diminished by the lesser purchasing power of the dollar.

Thus, for instance, if a $10,000 government bond may be bought for

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$9,000, those $9,000 in turn can now buy less than they could have bought when the $10,000 bond was issued. This is just another aspect of the truth that inflation imposes additional taxes on people because it reduces the value of their savings.

Taking into account these effects of inflation on the national debt, and applying the principle that real deficits must correspond to increases in the national debt, Eisner concludes that "our conventional measures of the budget deficit are devoid of much of their presumed economic relevance." To make budget figures relevant, Eisner recalculates them by adjusting them for inflation. The results of these adjustments are dramatic. It is impossible within a review essay to enumerate all the revolutionary changes produced by Eisner's analysis. A few illustrations must suffice: In 1968, one of the years which supposedly laid the foundation for the inflation of the seventies, the official deficit was $6 billion—adjusted for inflation (i.e., for the effects of higher prices and higher interest rates) that deficit of $6 billion turns into a *surplus* of $6.5 billion. In 1980 the "monstrous" deficit of $61 billion becomes a *surplus* of $7.6 billion. The official aggregate deficit of the four Carter years, 1977-1980, of $157.2 billion becomes an aggregate surplus of $72 billion!

Eisner's book discusses two other methods of presenting the budget (i.e., other than the "official" or "unified" budget): the national income and products accounts (NIPA) that exclude certain receipts and expenditures, and a budget adjusted to remove the effects of cyclical fluctuations in income and employment, variously called the "full-employment," "higher-employment," "standardized-employment," "cyclically adjusted," or "structural" budget. It is not necessary to dwell on these variations to do justice to Eisner's theses, apart from noting that each of these two variants of the budget can in turn be adjusted by Eisner's method for the effects of inflation, and that the very existence of these variations makes nonsense of the simple-minded notions about the deficit bandied about every day.

Why should we believe in Eisner's corrected budget figures that stand all our certainties on their head? For a simple reason: his figures are consistent with the economic history of the United States since 1945. In particular they explain why the Carter years produced the worst recession since the great depression as well as the highest rates of interest and inflation in recent memory.

In order to apply this test of consistency, the predictable consequences of budgetary surpluses and deficits must be understood, and Eisner's book devotes considerable space to that task. In essentials Eisner is a Keynesian. He demonstrates in historical detail and many tables that *real* deficits—by putting money in people's pockets—increase the gross national product, increase employment, increase the Dow Jones, do not "crowd out" credit to the private sector, do not push up interest rates—in short, they produce just the opposite effects of those predicted in the 1983 manifesto, so long as, and only so long as, there is less than full employment and less than optimal use of industrial capacity.

True, there were rising interest rates and prices in the 1970s, but according to Eisner these were due not to excess demand, but mainly to huge increases in the cost of energy inflicted on a spineless West by OPEC. As mentioned above, the budgets of the Carter years were actually in surplus, and the budget figures, as corrected by Eisner, show real deficits only from 1981 on: $18.3 billion in that year, $177 billion in 1982, $101 billion in 1983, and $154 billion in 1984. These first deficit years were the years during which the recession, inflation, and high interest rates in-

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herited from the surpluses of the Carter years were overcome by budgetary deficits. Had the Reagan Administration followed the counsels of David Stockman and the drafters of the 1983 manifesto, it would have treated the economy like a doctor who administers a bleeding to a marathon runner exhausted by dehydration.

Eisner's enormously valuable book can be faulted only on a few counts: First, its message is not easily accessible. Its prose is often forbidding, its sequence of ideas is not always easy to trace, and its text can sometimes be reconciled with its tabular data only by considerable effort. It is also puzzling why Eisner, having alerted us to the significance of the federal government's capital outlays and of the budgets of state and local governments, fails to include those two factors when assessing the true impact of the budget. For those assessments, he seems to rely exclusively on adjustments for inflation.

Finally, at the end of his book Robert Eisner leaves us with a dilemma. On the one hand he recognizes that the real deficits of today, as opposed to the theoretical deficits before 1981, cannot continue indefinitely without rekindling serious inflation. On the other hand he concludes that the "balanced budget" projected by Gramm-Rudman would actually produce in 1990 not a balanced budget but a "fully inflation-adjusted" surplus of 0.34 percent of GNP, or, if measured by the "high-employment budget," of $114.4 billion. For Eisner such a prospect is at least as bleak as inflation:

> One cannot properly counsel budget balancing in an economy with unemployment still near 7 percent and real economic growth well below its potential. The politics of Gramm-Rudman notwithstanding, a budget balanced by current federal rules of accounting is an invitation to economic disaster.

What, then, is to be done? Professor Eisner does not tell us. But it would appear that a Congress which has demonstrated its inability and disinclination to tackle the budget, to say nothing of doing so promptly, might well be persuaded to delegate to the executive branch the authority to impose a surtax on the personal and corporate income tax when a pre-determined boiling point of the mixture of full employment and optimal use of industrial capacity is reached, and to lift that surtax when the mixture has cooled down again.

The federal budget, as conventionally measured, has been in deficit in all but eight of the fifty-five years from 1931 to 1985. Yet the increase in the material well-being of the people of the United States during those years has been almost miraculous. Clearly deficits cannot be all bad. Even if some aspects of Eisner's analysis should be shown to be debatable, Eisner's book leaves no reasonable doubt that the daily portion of grief administered to all of us by the network news, most economic soothsayers, and foreign critics of the United States economy is based on data so simplistic as to amount to disinformation. Therefore, it behooves conservatives to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the words of Professor Eisner, before agreeing to cuts in the defense budget in the idolatrous service of the balanced budget. □

DEMON BOX

Ken Kesey/Viking/$18.95

Stephen Schwartz

Is the name of Ken Kesey still one to conjure with among American readers? There was indeed a time when it seemed as if much of our country's future literature would bear the impress of his peculiarly contradictory imagination. His first novel, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, has become an undying bestseller; the movie version threatens to become a contemporary cinema classic. Tom Wolfe's essay about him, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, became a fundamental text of 1960s millenarianism. But one seldom hears him mentioned today, even among the intellectually vagrant young.

This collection of pieces short and long may perhaps provide enough of an explanation for the fading of Kesey's star. Their intention is unvarying—they present a series of nostalgic homages to the spirit of the 1960s, the decade in which Kesey rose to prominence as an author and as an aspirant to the title of hippie messiah, a notable rival of Timothy Leary, Allen Ginsberg, and John Lennon. But unlike Ginsberg, the bad poet, and Lennon, the popular songwriter, Kesey, as a novelist originally of some seriousness, could not easily convey his message of revelation through his creative work. *Cuckoo's Nest*, although having as its subject such quintessential sixties themes as madness, the romanticized underclass, and Western regional sentiment, didn't blow any minds, to use the quaint locution. And so Kesey turned to the easier road, that of Timothy Leary: he painted an old school bus, gathered a crew of impressionable young people, and traveled far and wide, dispensing powerful drugs to all and sundry among the under-30s.

Nobody can deny that Kesey was a talented writer. I would even say that in the beginning he was a fine writer. But today, at least, he is a talented writer only, and no more; a capable worker, no better or worse than he who writes press releases for Drano or Pampers. His particular sell involves himself, his dreams about the sixties, and flashes of sophomoric philosophizing about prisons, or hitchhiking, or mental hospitals. In the end, he is a salesman of myths. But as this latest collection shows, the myths have become shopworn.

The main effect of these dozen meandering pieces is to prove once and for all that excessive drug consumption leads the writer not to greater imagination or insight but to a wallowing in the inconsequential. In most cases, any conclusion is lost in the void; if it is rescued, it proves to be trivial. One of the essays, "Oleo: Demon Briefs and Dopey Ditties," consists of some musings on his child's failures in school followed by some stoned and predictably idiotic song lyrics. A sample:

> Blackberry vines and barelegged wimmin/ They led me astray, they took me in swimmin/I reached for a cherry but I got me a lemon/Midst blackberry vines and barelegged wimmin.

The connection between the lyrics and the problems of his child is not made but perhaps is obvious, embarrassingly obvious.

Another piece, on the death of the erstwhile driver of his drug-bus, Neal Cassady, is incomprehensible for one who does not know the history of Kesey and Cassady. Even those sketches that might have turned into short stories, rather than bursts of literary swamp gas, find the author mired in the banal once it is informed with chemical meaning. In a memorial to John Lennon, "Now We Know How Many Holes It Takes to Fill the Albert Hall," Kesey describes the experience of fame after the publication of Tom Wolfe's essay, beginning, in his jejune manner:

> Stand in this spotlight, feel this eye pass over you. You never forget it. You are suddenly changed, lifted, singled out, elevated, and alone. . . . Self-consciousness and irresolution melt in this beam's blast. Grace and power surge in to take their place. Banging speed [injecting amphetamines] is the only thing even close.

Cuckoo's Nest remains interesting because its characters are brilliantly derived from the real-life subculture of the Pacific Northwest. Every character, with the possible exceptions of Big Nurse and McMurphy, is a recognizable human type, of interest because truthfully drawn. But the Kesey of *Cuckoo's Nest* is absent from *Demon Box*. There are no human types here. His portrait of the fictional Chief, a mentally disturbed American Indian, in *Cuckoo's Nest* had more life than his eulogistic sketch of his close friend Cassady. Have intimacy and grief dulled his pen? I think not; rather it is that once upon a time Kesey ceased being a writer and became, instead, an ideologue of the anti-America subculture, celebrating a drugged oblivion; a peculiar transmutation of the Buddhist priest role so many of the literary rebels of the 1950s coveted.

There has always been a heartlessness to Kesey, but Kesey the comic writer—as opposed to Kesey the silly writer, his most recent incarnation—could make his attitude work as literature. Today all that is left is the heartlessness. Everybody along Kesey's path is described with a certain tone of contempt. The title essay describes his fear of having people need anything from him, particularly the patients in the mental hospital where the film of *Cuckoo's Nest* is to be made. Kesey—the outcast and the friend of the prisoner, the advocate of reform in the mental health industry—finds the modest inquisitiveness of real patients unnerving and distasteful. The real Kesey doesn't cotton to mental patients—they have what he calls here "the loser's profile."

At any cost, Kesey wants to avoid being seen as a loser; indeed, a number of the essays in this book center on his difficult attempts to divest himself of psychotic hippie burnouts who have gathered unto him in the wake of his sixties exploits. But that Kesey himself is a loser is proved by this terrible book; *Demon Box* is important only as testimony to the enormous capacity for

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Stephen Schwartz is senior editor at the Institute for Contemporary Studies *in San Francisco.*

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self-waste to which so many gifted Americans succumbed in the 1960s. To those who did not themselves go through the sixties it will be, without doubt, obscure and baffling. To those who did, the book is a cause for discomfort if not a certain shame. □

THE UNFINISHED JOURNEY: AMERICA SINCE WORLD WAR II

William H. Chafe/Oxford University Press/$24.95

Eric J. Sundquist

Asked by a colleague why he bothers to write history, William Chafe answered, according to his preface, that "history offers a way of defining what mattered in the past, and understanding what has shaped the way we live today. It may even guide our attitudes and behavior in the future." This may excite the undergraduates, but the mild irony, if it is that, puts no edges on his cuddly truism. Moreover, when he calls World War II a turning point in American history (ushering in economic prosperity, political crisis, and the germs of social change) and 1968 the "pivotal dividing line of the postwar years" (separating chaos from a fresh conservatism), Chafe does not exactly break virgin ground. But in highlighting the categories of race, class, and gender as a way to measure "the degree and kind of progress that has occurred in American society," he has taken a new departure among recent general histories of the postwar United States.

Inasmuch as Chafe is the author of several books on civil rights and the women's movement, this emphasis on social issues is no surprise. Since the last few decades have witnessed the triumph of sociology among intellectuals, it is even appropriate that race and gender override foreign affairs and that "class" turns out to be an expression of capitalism's shortcomings. However, if the main audience for Chafe's book is likely to be not specialists but students and lay readers, he runs the risk of writing an isolationist domestic history at a time such an approach makes increasingly little sense.

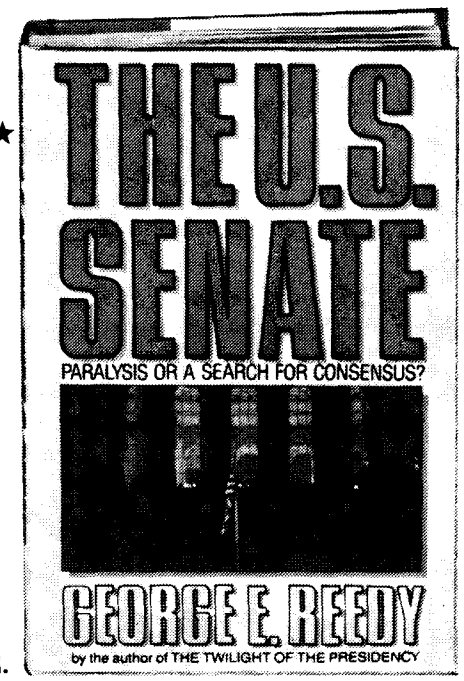
Following the standard line of the rise and fall of what Godfrey Hodgson has called the "liberal consensus" (the struggle for social justice unfolding alongside hard, then soft, then evaporating anti-Communism), Chafe's story is from many standpoints learned and intelligent. His strengths lie in the interweaving of domestic policy, economic development, demographic change, and cultural expressions of popular thought. His analysis of the divergent strands of the civil rights movement is powerful and comprehensive. Despite his persuasive account of domestic upheaval and social epochs, Chafe nevertheless shows little interest in judging America's role in modern history or in speculating on the shape of the world that will come of our past.

His isolationism takes several forms. In particular, the problems (and advances) of women and minorities are often allowed to stand forth provincially on his American stage, crowding out significant global acts of diplomacy and war from both ends of the political spectrum. For example, with the exception of a few casual remarks in connection with the Bay of Pigs, Vietnam, and Chile, Chafe has nothing to say about the creation and operations of the CIA, even though there is every reason to believe that it has had more bearing on recent American history than, say, the rise of feminism. In another instance, Chafe's discussion of the civil rights battles of the 1960s and the advent of "Black Power" relegates Malcolm X to a footnote. This (1) misinterprets the Muslim contribution to black separatism both in its early days and in its contemporary eructation under Louis Farrakhan; (2) obscures the ongoing quarrel among black Americans over the respective merits of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X; and (3) ignores a significant source of the now ineradicable alignment of the Third World with American minorities, a development central to the convergence of America's domestic and global history in the last two decades.

As the example of Malcolm X suggests, Chafe on the one hand tends to divorce the struggle for black civil rights from more wide-reaching issues of ethnicity, and on the other scants its less reassuring developments. He explicitly admits that "race," as he uses it, will mean "black." A few passing remarks on the bigotry faced by Jews and Chicanos constitute the only attention accorded a subject whose neglect is all the more unfortunate given the effort of Nathan Glazer and others to demonstrate the crucial relationships among many ethnic groups in public policy-making during the period Chafe writes about. Here, as elsewhere, his avoidance of the global events that produced waves of new immigrants from Cuba, China, Southeast Asia, and Latin America blinds him to a problem more complex than the admittedly heroic struggle for black civil rights.

At the same time, he can bypass difficult domestic questions. Although it had an enormous impact, for example, Daniel Patrick Moynihan's controversial 1965 report, *The Negro Family*, is not mentioned, perhaps because it soon became fashionable to see his observations on the disintegration of the black family as racist blunders (even though Moynihan himself took pains to say that poverty was responsible). The rhetoric of victimization in Chafe's book is low-keyed, but it crops up, for instance, in his passive characterizations of women's entrapment in "the type of jobs set aside for female workers" and of escalating black impoverishment in the 1970s: "Black women also experienced most severely the debilitating consequences of the new sexual mores." Too often the "triple whammy of race, class, and gender oppression," as Chafe phrases it, floats forth to explain the collapse of the welfare vision. The large gains made by a black middle class are chalked up to a "strange filtering process," and outstanding achievements by blacks in the arts, in sports, and in the professions are neglected.

In tandem with his emphasis on social history, Chafe gives particular attention to presidential psychology



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Eric J. Sundquist teaches American literature at the University of California, Berkeley.

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and personality. He accurately characterizes Kennedy's fabricated intellectual pose and relish for a style of great deeds, noting that his Inaugural "evoked a sense of moral alarm about a world that for eight years had largely been at peace." On the other hand, since Chafe has nothing to say about Hungary, China, or the Suez, and postpones any discussion of Korea and Vietnam until a chapter that *follows* that on Johnson's social programs, one might well believe that Kennedy manufactured alarm out of thin air. In the case of Johnson, he renders a compelling picture of the President in torment over his own adequacy and the waste of Vietnam, punctuated by frequent examples of Texan extravagance ("I want *loyalty*. I want [my staff] to kiss my ass in Macy's window at high noon"). Agreeing with the standard diagnosis, Chafe argues that Johnson's desire to match the deeds of his spiritual father, FDR, and to triumph over the Kennedy mystique led him to sacrifice the Great Society on the altar of Vietnam. He tried "to transcend all human frailties and impose a solution from above that would bring the consensus he so desperately craved." But "by seeking to subjugate the world to his personal vision, he ended up destroying the one thing that he really cared about."

This eulogy to fallen magnificence could just as well describe Johnson's successor. Yet Chafe's view of Nixon's mendacity and questionable mental health is so intense that he loses perspective on the President's significant accomplishments at a turning point in modern world history. Whereas Johnson is represented as a classical tragedian who acts out "the fragility of the liberal consensus," Nixon is a maniac callously exploiting middle America's fury against the left. Johnson, in short, had the correct social outlook.

Interestingly, it is those Presidents with openly aggressive personalities—and foreign policies—that elicit the most careful psychological treatment. (The section on Reagan, journalistic in character, is too sketchy to judge, although Chafe accurately portrays the country's shift to the right.) Roosevelt, Eisenhower, and Carter therefore escape the couch. Chafe does not sanctify Roosevelt in his dealings with Stalin; yet he presents him in the mold of a Lincoln whose "mystical confidence" in his own ability to overcome the difficulties of his age would never face the final test. Contrary to all recent evidence of Eisenhower's hidden-hand brilliance, Chafe bluntly asserts that Ike failed to provide "constructive" moral and social leadership. Carter, two decades later, appears naive, self-righteous, and ineffectual, but he is also the victim of his times and of "misfortunes" such as the hostage crisis in Iran.

This unevenly distributed emphasis on presidential psychology, especially on instances of breakdown and deviance allied with a drive toward greatness, accords with a reading of recent American history that thrives on tragic drama. The tragedy begins with Truman, whose misinterpretation of Yalta sought to deny the Soviets their rightful sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. Chafe's analysis of the options available to the United States at the outset of the Cold War is careful and convincing—with one exception: he remarks, but apparently cannot take seriously, the Stalinist cataclysm (some 500,000 murdered in the postwar years alone). Neither the misconception of a Soviet military threat to the United States nor the worst case for American capitalism's self-interested creation of new markets matters greatly in the face of such a brute fact. Chafe does not pretend to find a lockstep progression from the Truman Doctrine to the riots at the Chicago Democratic convention twenty years later, but his overall picture is that of a march toward social justice and full equality betrayed by ruinous anti-Commu-

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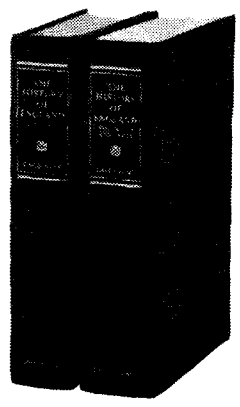

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This new edition, with modernized typography, is based on the posthumous edition of 1778, the last to contain corrections by Hume. William B. Todd, Kerr Centennial Professor in English History and Culture at the University of Texas at Austin, has provided a new Foreword in Volume I. Hume's own cumulative index may be found at the conclusion of Volume VI.
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nism and foolish foreign escapades.

In fact, one might just as well argue that an aggressive foreign policy and belief in containment avoided an even more disastrous world war and fueled a booming economy for twenty years, thus making the quest for social justice possible in the first place. By the same token, Chafe's analysis of the relationships among the civil rights, student, and women's movements, all three becoming infused with nihilistic elements of the counterculture as they drove toward the climactic year of 1968, is excellent and convincing. Yet his hagiographic depictions of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy as the slain saviors of a splintered America lead him to overplay the drama: "The nation seemed to come apart as, one blow after another, it reeled from psychic and emotional wounds unprecedented in the modern era."

Awful as the assassinations of King and Kennedy were, this assessment of the period only makes sense if one has adopted a narcissistic view of the world and the "modern era." Narcissism, as the psychologists tell us, can lead to rage. Chafe's treatment of Vietnam offers a case in point. He is quick to proclaim that, upon Nixon's ordered incursion by American troops in 1970, "Cambodia lost its neutrality," and that Nixon's touted plan for peace, culminating as Chafe sees it in the Christmas bombing of Hanoi in 1972, represented at best "the acting out of a bully's fantasies" and at worst "a criminal abuse of human rights that in the eyes of some was the equivalent of genocide."

Leave aside the farcical nature of the first claim and the willful lack of interest in the absurd task bequeathed Nixon in the case of the second. Instead, consider Chafe's meditative analysis of post-1972 Indochina: "American troops withdrew from Vietnam, their departure followed quickly by the total collapse of the Thieu regime." That's it—seventeen words at the outset of a new chapter on the 1970s, beginning with the "positive legacy of the 1960s" for women and blacks, which later describes the televised final days of Saigon in two sentences. There is no question that the snail-like progress of the Paris peace talks—which in the event turned out to be no progress at all—cost thousands of lives. Yet Chafe assumes both that this was clear at the time and that no reasonable goal, save America's egotistic honor, was or ever had been in view. Moreover, if Vietnam is the central event in postwar American history (as Chafe's chapters on LBJ and 1968 would imply), is it not worth mentioning why and how a staggering bloodbath ensued upon the Communist victories in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia? Is that not as much a part of American history as Nixon's so-called genocide and the United States military's "crypto-racism" and war crimes?

Because the 1970s became a time for Americans to escape the trauma of Vietnam and all it represented, that ought not allow the historian to do the same. (Is Robin Morgan's theory of the vaginal orgasm more important than Henry Kissinger's memoirs? Or Ford's pardon of Nixon a greater abuse of human rights than the creation of a million boat people?) "Like the illusions one beholds walking through a house of mirrors, America's best intentions became grotesque when imposed on a distant culture," Chafe remarks at the outset of his discussion of the war. Few will disagree. But isolationist history can be its own house of mirrors. As Chafe points out, Korea "universalized the Cold War" for the United States, making the Far East and eventually the entire globe, mistakenly or not, theaters as important as Western Europe. Even so, he has no thoughts on the Berlin Wall, the good life in Cuba, or the kaleidoscope of great leaps, experiments, and cultural revolutions that left millions dead in Mao's China. Nor, for that matter, has he anything to say of a variety of Third World revolutions, coups, assassinations, and campaigns of terror, by both the left and the right, involving Americans or bearing directly on American history. What have turned out over the last decade to be the significant regions of world conflict—the Middle East, Africa, Latin America—are mentioned only by accident.

It is of course not reasonable to expect a historian to take note of every worldwide incident. However, an emphasis on domestic problems related to race and gender need not exclude pertinent facts about the world, especially in an account that aims to be comprehensive and does, in fact, accomplish an immense work of synthesis. Chafe's volume is by no means a rigid New Left interpretation of the postwar years like Lawrence Wittner's valuable *Cold War America* (1974) or Howard Zinn's flagellating incantation, *Postwar America: 1945-1971* (1973). His perspective is clear, he writes with dedication to democratic values, and his book covers more ground than other recent surveys. Chafe's book is likely to become a standard work for the next few years—most of all, perhaps, because he has given blacks and women more pages than anyone else. That this is not necessarily a good reason to applaud a book or adopt it for college courses will be irrelevant. Isolationism is still in vogue. □

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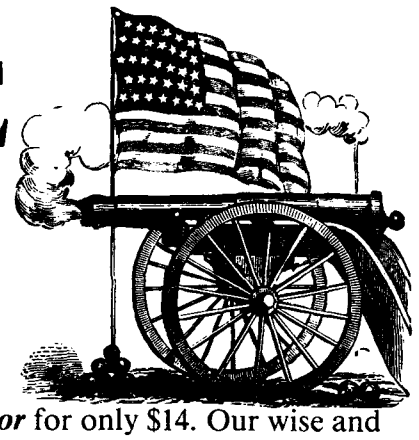

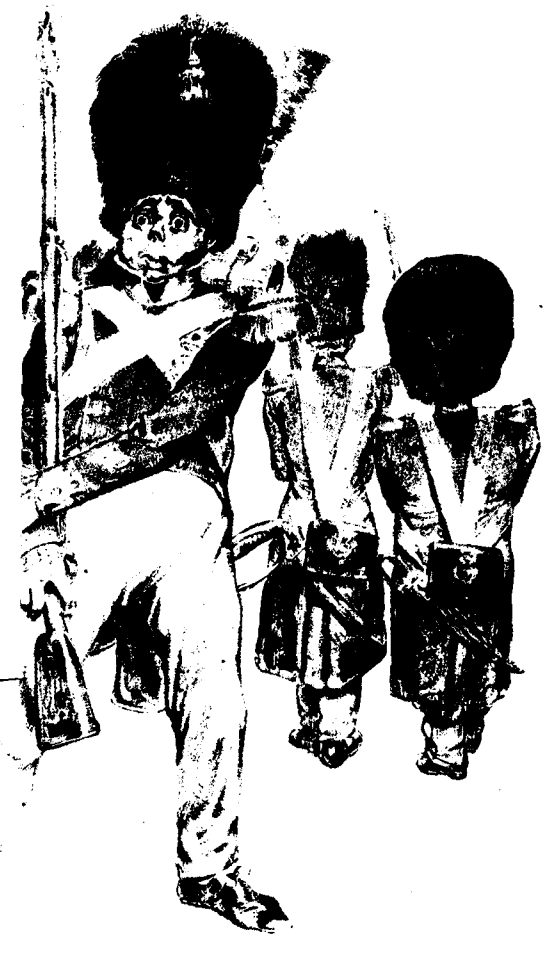

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MERRY GENTLEMEN (AND ONE LADY)

J. Bryan, III/Atheneum/$17.95

Kent Owen

Gaiety has lately led to loose talk. Either the good word is commandeered by homophiles, or the experience it names is confused with silly-ass frivolity. Clearly, the playful, high-spirited life-lovingness that true gaiety should mean deserves better. Without it the human condition runs a deficit. What we need is not mere restoration of definition, but revival of the blessed state of being. This is too serious a concern to be entrusted to drunks in lampshades or cut-ups with whoopee cushions. This is man's work.

J. Bryan, III's assortment of familiar essays strikes a blow for liberty. The book will at once gladden those who cherish wit, conviviality, and fellowship—and sadden with nostalgia those of us who yearn for that lost world we were born too late to enjoy. Damn that self-pity; it can ruin a party faster than light beer or accountants. No, Mr. Bryan—J. is for Joseph—spares us sentimental journeys to the frenetic urbanity of "little old New York," although a few who supplied the ethos are on display, whether in Philadelphia and Bucks County, Hollywood, Chicago, New England, or Brisbane, Australia. He conjures up a classy neighborhood in the Republic of Letters, where bright talk and coruscating banter, plentiful drinks and victuals, lively house parties and frolicsome outings, congenial gentlemen and vivacious ladies made for the good life well lived.

Prospective readers whose strenuous consciences make mirth a breach of the social contract and a threat to moral rectitude will doubtless find Mr. Bryan's recollections distressing. Such unhappy persons should not buy this book unless they promise to read it in good faith; otherwise, the stories will be wasted on them, depriving the more deserving. As Dorothy Parker (the one lady of the title) wrote as an anti-dedication to an anthology she had helped to edit, "Dear Readers, Wherever you are and however kind you be, these stories are too good for you."

Kent Owen is The American Spectator*'s Indiana Editor.*

Mr. Bryan of Richmond, Virginia was born there in 1904, in itself a good omen. This means he has seen the elephant and heard the owl, not to mention choicer parts of the century along with its worse, from fine points of vantage. He worked on a Chicago newspaper, *Time, Fortune, Parade,* the *New Yorker, Town and Country,* and the *Saturday Evening Post* (the authentic, Philadelphia-based magazine—accept no substitutes) until 1940 when he became a freelance and settled back home in Richmond. Over the years, his work has earned him the praise of his fellows and made him one of the most respected craftsmen of letters in America. Mr. Bryan's prose is about as good as a writer can make it, and the voice one hears in these essays is urbane, debonair, and full of fun. The present book is a treat clean through, and it's his best.

To divulge the gist of his tales wouldn't be sporting—he's a superb raconteur—and it wouldn't be fair to inveigle you into the tent with teasingly terrific lines—jests leap about the pages like zany acrobats. The "merry gentlemen" are Fred Allen, Robert Benchley, George Bond, Marc Connelly, Finis Farr, Corey Ford, Nunnally Johnson, S.J. Perelman, Arthur Samuels, John Steinbeck, Donald Ogden Stewart, Frank Sullivan, and Hugh Troy. Dorothy Parker does more than her share to compensate for minority status. One is fortunate to be spared the likes of Lillian Hellman.

You may not have heard of George Bond or Arthur Samuels; the former was a cheeky Navy buddy of Bryan's whose wisecracks dented the brass, the latter a tony magazine editor whose "deviltries" were ingenious. Finis Farr's striking moniker should be known to biography fanciers and readers of *National Review*; his letters are delight tempered to comic genius, as signed, for instance, by "Peiping Tom, the Chinese Voyeur." The word games Farr and Bryan invented, "Spurious Lincoln Anecdotes" and "Plantation Proverbs," should not, repeat should not, be read by anyone who must keep stitches intact or is prone to convulsions. By now the Honest Abe fabrications are probably working their way into history texts while the bogus adages are being tracked down and stamped out by the Urban League. The book will likely be banned in Newton, Massachusetts on both counts.

Hugh Troy is another less familiar figure, unless one recognizes him as the most inspired practical joker Cornell has given to America. In point of fact, he was also a talented muralist with a penchant for adding unrequired details to his commissions. If you haven't sampled Nunnally Johnson's movies or letters, Frank Sullivan's antic sketches, Corey Ford's parodies and articles, or Marc Connelly's plays, you're missing some of the best humor Americans have created. Robert Benchley's essays, movie shorts, and theatre reviews are sui generis. He was, for all I know, the only great humorist to come from Harvard, which has succeeded in turning out many unintentionally funny people.

How John Steinbeck got in this gallery was beyond my ken until Mr. Bryan explained it. Keep in mind the book is about the Bryan Circle (he wouldn't call it that), admission to which certifies the bearer as most amusing. Thus, somewhere wedged in the crannies of the Steinbeck shelf must be amusing passages—*Travels with Charley* may be the place to look—but I've overlooked them. Then there's Donald Ogden Stewart, who was a skillful satirist and screenwriter, but also, peculiarly enough, a fervent, humorless Communist in spite of (or maybe because of) all the money he made and spent. His is a strange story, one Mr. Bryan recounts instructively.

To my taste the Connelly and Perelman pieces are undernourished, probably because I was hoping for an antidote to the recent biography of the wizardly Perelman, which examines him in a harsh, unforgiving light. I was also disappointed by the Fred Allen piece, perhaps because so many of his lines, devastatingly droll when intoned in that bandsaw voice, fall rather flat on the page. On everyone else Mr. Bryan is unsurpassed. The essays on Benchley, Farr, Sullivan, Parker, and Troy are character sketches that belong with the classics of the genre. They resonate with exuberance, ribaldry, and fellow-feeling. By the way, a few of Mr. Bryan's chapters are rewrites of earlier pieces, artfully recast and touched up. He uses the handy device of appendices attached as afterthoughts to each essay, most as entertaining as Gibbon's footnotes, and with less Latin.

Friendship is the governing principle in this generous offering, certainly as much as merriment. Despite Mr. Bryan's title description of his friends as merry, his portraits bring out a spectrum of tones and hues, dark and melancholy as much as light and buoyant, although the wit and humor are dominant. I doubt that he intends "merry" to be understood as ironic, but that reversal of meaning, or ambiguity, is evident in most, maybe all of the lives. What Mr. Bryan presents is a set of vivid images of the forms that friendship takes: the pleasures of good company, memorable talk, colorful experiences shared and recalled over a lifetime.

Some of his friends were remarkably generous, kindly, and sympathetic, and their modes of humor reflect those virtues. Some had styles of wit that were keen, lacerating, often cruel, but, even so, wildly funny when the stroke was thrust and funnier when recollected in tranquillity. For him there persists a willingness to suspend moral judgment or, better yet, a readiness to accept his friends unconditionally. His reluctance to moralize is in part what makes him an affable narrator and, beyond that, what gives his book a fine seriousness. Not seriousness, mind you, as a solemn duty, but as a graceful effort (an essay, really) to understand and appreciate the vital characteristics of actual persons.

In large measure, then, Mr. Bryan's book is about the manifold joys of friendship as embodied in his friends. Moreover, it is about free spirits who rejoiced in their freedom and, for the most part, put it to splendid use. Finally, the impression Mr. Bryan himself imparts is that of the ideal friend: amusing, attentive, encouraging, understanding, loyal, and, in the highest sense, true. His friends are lucky indeed to have him as their interpreter. J. Bryan, III has obliged them honorably and nobly. □

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DIARY OF A YUPPIE

Louis Auchincloss/Houghton Mifflin/$16.95

Richard T. Marin

There it is again: the hated "y" word. Yuppie. . . . The word trips from the tongue like a small belch. A glottal stop followed by too many *p*'s—a rude combination. What's worse, it is also a hideous cliche for which no adequate synonyms have yet been developed. One naturally assumes, therefore, that when a venerable gentleman of letters such as Louis Auchincloss combines the words "yuppie" and "diary" in the title of this, his latest novel, it is with mirthful intent. What could be duller, one might ask (chortling knowingly), than the diary of a yuppie? Unfortunately, mirth is a trait Auchincloss's fiction is not long on.

Twenty years ago Auchincloss's novels must have come as something of a breath of fresh air amid what many reviewers regarded as the fetid literary atmosphere of the day. His fiction did not eulogize unclean highway heroes or detail the passions of sniveling transvestites in Brooklyn. He shunned *les bas fonds* and never learned, as Auden said, "how to be plain and awkward . . . among the Filthy filthy too." He inhabited not the lowlife, but the highlife; the world of high finance and high society. While other novelists panted after the sordid pleasures of drugs, sex, and violence, Auchincloss carefully traced figures in the carpet, spinning Jamesian yarns in tasteful, decorous prose. A reviewer of Mr. Auchincloss's *Tales of Manhattan* called him the "Mr. Clean" of contemporary literature, because his writing contained "no smells, no grime, no crummy sex." That was in 1967. Little has changed.

There is sex in *Diary of a Yuppie*, but it is never crummy, and by modern standards (and my own prurient ones), there isn't nearly enough of it. The narrator, one discovers early on in the story, is otherwise occupied. Consider the novel's opening lines: "I have been working such long hours on this last corporate takeover that I have hardly made an entry in my journal for six weeks." We are thus introduced to the two protagonists: one being Robert Service, 32, associate in the fictional law firm of Hoyt, Welles & Andrew ("thirty-six partners, a hundred clerks"), and the other, Auchincloss's old nemesis—money.

Like Auchincloss's 1960s bestseller, *The Embezzler*, this new novel is a tale of greed and glory on Wall Street. It is the world Auchincloss—veteran club man and for thirty years a partner on the Street—knows best. Robert Service, the diarist of the book's title, is a brash, ambitious baby boomer, stuck in an "old guard" firm where prep school ethics still guide business decisions and where clients are still fleeced the old-fashioned way—on golf courses. Such niceties are all hypocritical posh to Robert Service, who wants to get on with the business of getting ahead in life and will stop only just short of the law to do so. "A man could go right up to the threshold of crime," he muses, "but not a step farther." Not a bad philosophy, by Wall Street standards—indeed, one might want to hire such a man around tax time—but it drives him from his law firm, and his loving wife Alice.

Service flees Hoyt, Welles & Andrew with a few trusted henchmen and sets himself up as a founding partner of a new firm, a "sharp cutting weapon" with which he hopes to bleed the competition. Once he gets a whiff of power, he also finds himself drawn to the feline scent of a woman, Sylvia Sands, who like Service is heatedly clawing her way to the tip of Manhattan society. In the hands of a lesser novelist, the narrative might have taken on a pulpy Krantzian tone at this point. But Auchincloss, as always, is worried about his characters' moral, not physical, endowments; with ethical, not sexual, prowess. And his leading man, Robert Service, is not completely without a conscience. The windy denouement swells with talk of the metaphysics of mergers and of Faustian bargains with a devil who nowadays sports pin-stripes and tasseled loafers.

True, the issue of yuppie ethics, such as they are, deserves a more profound analysis than it is likely to receive in *New York* magazine, or any of the coffee-table press. Auchincloss, however, is not really the man to do it. "I guess you have to have been born after World War II to be a real skunk," Robert Service remarks early on in the novel. Well, Auchincloss, now in his seventieth year, wasn't even born after World War I. His literary values are not even of this century, much less this decade.

Auchincloss has written with grace and ease (in *The Rector of Justin*) of New York society in the 1890s. But his fiction seems hopelessly antiquated in the 1980s. It was once said of his novels that they represented a museum of all that American writing valued before World War I. His characters have always inhabited drawing rooms, not living rooms. Living rooms, for one, have televisions—an apparatus that Auchincloss ignores with silent contempt. Are we to believe that the lifestyles of today's rich and famous do not include a few private moments with Pat Sajak, or Alistair Cooke?

If nothing else, the yuppies will at least command a sentence in the history books as the world's first generation of vidiots. Even Auchincloss's newly found liberal sensibility (he votes Democrat now) seems oddly out of synch with the times. "I was a dedicated conservative," he said in a recent interview. "Then I grew up." One wonders if this conversion took place at his Wall Street office, his Park Avenue apartment, or his summer retreat in Bedford? A *conservative* attack on the New Breed, from the ranks of the Old Monied, would have made for a much gamier read.

Who, then, will chronicle this generation for literary posterity? Auchincloss's dark, Jamesian seriousness seems too dour a voice for the task. Jay McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City* has been touted as the Great Yuppie Novel. But how many yuppies spend their time in after-hours clubs chatting up girls with shaved heads? *Bright Lights*, like Martin Scorcese's film *After Hours*, is an urban professional's nightmare. It is about everything pencil-necked investment bankers fear and loathe: drugs, Mohawks, downtown New York. . . . No, what is needed is a narrator with a crueler sense of irony than the sensitive "artist" of McInerney's book. Is there, perhaps, some latter-day Flaubert on the Hudson waiting to paint the pastel tedium of life among the yuppies: its Reebok romances and microwaved success stories? Or is it a tale too terrible to be told? □

Richard T. Marin is an assistant editor of Harper's.

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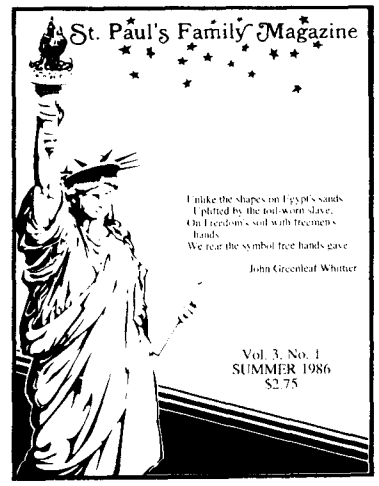

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SCHIFFREN
(continued from page 39)

The issues that most set Lucas apart from the "pragmatist" Democrats in the Blanchard administration are the social ones—abortion, school prayer, willingness to infringe upon the "civil liberties" of children who bring handguns to school. Blanchard has repeatedly vetoed the legislature's attempts to stop the Medicaid funding of abortions, as the Republican before him did. Lucas promises to go along with the legislature. He has also indicated support for school vouchers—which the Michigan Education Association-backed Blanchard professed never to have heard of.

Can Lucas turn things around and win? The reason he is behind 30 points in the polls (as we go to press) isn't white racism—most of his support is coming from white, middle-class Republicans, and voters repeatedly have denied that race is a factor. But the hard truth is that Lucas cannot win without a large chunk of support from black, Wayne County Democrats—40 percent is considered the minimum necessary. The hope was that black voters would be proud enough of electing the nation's first black governor to cross over in unprecedented numbers. Yet there is no reason to believe that this will happen. Primary exit polls revealed an eight percent black Democratic cross-over vote. Fourteen percent of black voters consider themselves Republicans currently, up from about 11 percent last year. The *News* poll showed that among blacks, 66 percent support Blanchard, 21 percent support Lucas.

If Lucas decides he really wants to win, he must begin seeking those critical black voters aggressively. That will involve a direct challenge to Detroit's black Democratic establishment, which, though never friendly to him even when he was a Democrat, is now punishing him for breaking ranks. Since he bagged the top spot, the barrage of outrageous slurs and defamation has been unrelenting, with the Hon. John Conyers, Democrat from Michigan's First District and a leader of the Congressional Black Caucus, holding the megaphone. Examples abound. Conyers recently told a group that Lucas is like "some Jews who led their brothers and sisters into the ovens of the Holocaust."

"Biologically [Lucas] is black," Conyers said, "but he is not black in the spirit of Martin Luther King or the civil rights movement." At one press conference Conyers noted that "the President of the U.S. is coming to Detroit to put his arms around this Uncle Tom," and demanded that Lucas uninvite Reagan (whom Conyers has charged with "genocide" against blacks). Not to do this, Conyers said, would prove that Bill Lucas is "not black."

The anti-Lucas coalition has also enlisted the support of Detroit's highly politicized black churches, which have plenty of clout with city residents, and whose ministers head local branches of organizations like the NAACP. Over the course of the fall, Conyers's rantings have engendered a growing backlash among some less political black leaders. (Detroit's Black Muslims, not part of the network, endorsed Lucas, citing his strong family values, and saying that he "will help create a better atmosphere for the free enterprise system to work in Michigan.")

The most basic reason for the attacks on Lucas by the black establishment is self-interest. Conyers and Detroit Mayor Coleman Young have long treated their black constituency as something they own. And Young especially has used Detroit's votes as a bargaining chip with all previous governors, Republican or Democratic, to exact special considerations and transfers of revenues from out-of-state to the city. Naturally they are extremely anxious about anyone they can't control.

That Lucas is a moderate black already makes him a threat, because a growing number of black voters are becoming disenchanted with politics as usual. Taxes and crime in Detroit are at historic highs and the quality of education and services at historic lows. Black Detroit residents want better services and lower taxes just as their white counterparts do, and someone who offers that while supporting affirmative action and state divestment from South Africa (as Lucas does) could start a mad rush to the Democratic party exit ramp.

And that is why it is unfortunate that Bill Lucas has not grabbed the initiative and offered those voters the crystal clear choice of a "new conservative" vision for the future. It would still be an uphill battle, and with the threat he poses to Michigan's dominant labor and black political establishments, things would be tough at the most propitious of times. Still, despite Lucas's caution, his candidacy is the first step in dismantling the old liberal coalition, which has wreaked such havoc in the state. □

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CORRESPONDENCE
(continued from page 9)

Be Gentle

It seems to me that Wladyslaw Pleszczynski's very critical review of Romuald Spasowski's *Liberation of One*, published in the August 1986 issue of your most respectable magazine, is too harsh. Certainly, Spasowski belonged to the Communist elite and as such has many sins, known and unknown. But distinction should be made between those few who served the Communist state driven (in part at least) by idealistic motives, and the majority of opportunistic careerists. From this point of view, comparison of Spasowski with Rurarz cannot be done in favor of the latter, and I doubt if you can find many persons from Solidarity circles thinking otherwise.

Spasowski's war record is maybe not impressive, but he certainly risked his life by hiding the Jewish Bronstein family. Spending most of the Stalinist period abroad, he apparently did not participate in atrocities committed by Security (and others) in the country. Finally, he was probably one of the least corrupted of Polish officials in the 1970s. Having suffered many personal tragedies, and having been condemned to death by Jaruzelski's military court, he deserves, in my opinion, at least a justly balanced treatment in America.

The Liberation of One is not a good book for two reasons: it is written too openly for the American reader, and in a very naive fashion. One could expect more from the former vice-minister of External Affairs. But judging a book and judging a man are two different matters.

—W. Yotz
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Wladyslaw Pleszczynski replies:

Since "Solidarity circles" can be said to include well over 10 million Poles, I imagine there may be a wide range of opinion therein on the relative merits of former ambassadors Spasowski and Rurarz. The point I tried to make in my review, evidently missed by W. Yotz in his dogged effort to find something—anything—good to say about an "idealistic" Communist, is that Mr. Spasowski's credibility is suspect. In his book Spasowski lies about his role in Communist Poland's anti-Semitic purges of 1968. If he can't come clean on this filthy issue, the kindest thing that can be said about the rest of his autobiography is that it is self-serving and hypocritical. Sorry, Mr. Yotz, but "judging a book and judging a man" are *not* two different matters when the book in question is an autobiography and the man its author.

Ukrainian Responsibility

Sympathy with the Ukrainian people's just desire for national independence should not obscure the record of Ukrainian atrocities during the Second World War. Adrian Karatnycky ("The Ukrainian Option," *TAS*, August 1986) mentions the thousands of Ukrainians who lined the streets to welcome the invading Nazis in 1941, an understandable reaction after years of Stalinist oppression. What he does not mention are the Ukrainian mobs who, just a few days later, marauded through the streets of Lwow, torturing and beating to death upwards of 4,000 Jews. Less than a month after that, 2,000 more

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Jews were slaughtered by Ukrainian militiamen during a pogrom in the same city.

Similar pogroms took place throughout the countryside, sometimes led by the local intelligentsia. In some villages, the populace actually established concentration camps for Jews on its own initiative. Collaborationist Ukrainian municipal administrations frequently asked permission from the Germans to launch their own anti-Jewish campaigns.

While many Ukrainians courageously risked their lives to save Jews from the Holocaust, it is also true that the Germans found an eager and cooperative population in the Ukraine when it came to liquidating Jews. Not only were Ukrainian recruits sent to guard Jewish ghettos and concentration camps in Poland (Ukrainian guards outnumbered German SS, for instance, at Treblinka), but they actively participated in the extermination process, according to witnesses. This behavior, it should be pointed out, was not a historical aberration. Between 1917 and 1920, 75,000 Jews had been murdered in Ukrainian pogroms.

While German propaganda was largely responsible for whipping up anti-Jewish hysteria among the peasants, Ukrainian nationalists were not themselves blameless. In 1941, followers of Stepan Bandera, later head of the UPA, declared: "Long live greater independent Ukraine without Jews, Poles and Germans. Poles behind the San, Germans to Berlin, Jews to the gallows."

Ukrainian nationalists were indeed as anti-Nazi as they were anti-Soviet, knowing full well that Hitler's master plan was to reduce the Slavic populations to slavery. This being the case, one must conclude that Ukrainian anti-Semitism was an indigenous phenomenon for which the Ukrainians themselves must bear full responsibility. Soviet propaganda notwithstanding, Jewish suspicions of Ukrainian nationalism are based on bitter historical experience.

—Sam Shube
New York, New York

Adrian Karatnycky replies:
Sam Shube's letter raises the important issue of Ukrainian anti-Semitism and collaboration with the Nazis. A few clarifications are in order. Mr. Shube's "citation" of a Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) statement which calls for sending "Jews to the gallows" is nowhere to be found among the official documents of the UPA nor among those of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) headed by Stepan Bandera. Indeed, the nationalist UPA program was based on liberal democratic principles and support for an independent Ukrainian state which was to defend the rights of its Polish, Jewish, and Russian minorities.

As to Mr. Shube's assertion concerning Ukrainian pogroms in 1941, there can be no question *some* Ukrainians in Lvov participated in atrocities against Jews. However, the leading role in these acts was played by the Nazis. A Nazi document in the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz contains a specific reference to the pogrom referred to by Mr. Shube. It attributes the brutal murder of 7,000 Jews on July 16, 1941 to the German Sicherheitspolizei (document R58/214, p. 191).

There were tens of thousands of Ukrainian collaborators and numerous Ukrainian nationalists who shielded Jews from Nazis. The UPA guerrillas fought a two-front war against Hitler and Stalin. OUN members executed hundreds of Ukrainians who collaborated with the Nazis, and many nationalists in turn were executed by the Germans. Some Ukrainian slave-laborers sent to fight the French resistance deserted to the French side and fought as the Bohun and Chevtchenko battalions.

Therefore, to equate the Ukrainian nationalist legacy with anti-Semitism

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and collaboration is a great mistake. True Ukrainian nationalists denounced and resisted Nazi imperialism and the Nazi ideology which regarded the Ukrainians as a race of subhumans.

Anti-Semitism is a horrible phenomenon which has manifested itself in virulent fashion in France, Germany, Russia, Poland, and among Ukrainians. It is the responsibility of all democrats to combat it. This can be done most effectively by nations which are not stateless. In the final analysis, Mr. Shube is right to point out examples of anti-Semitism by segments of the Ukrainian nation. As Elie Wiesel has suggested, however, it would be wrong to ascribe national guilt to any group.

Today, leaders of the Ukrainian dissident movement in the USSR are committed democrats who work closely with their Jewish counterparts. Many of them have written in *samizdat* on the issue of Ukrainian-Jewish relations and have denounced anti-Semitism. I trust that it is not the implication of Sam Shube's remarks that such men and women should be denied their right to an independent, democratic state which could safeguard the rights of all its citizens.

Whose Big Idea?

Throughout the debate over the merits of tax reform there has been a parallel mini-debate over who came up with the idea in the first place. Was it Bill Bradley while he was still with the Knicks? Was it Jack Kemp while he was still in diapers? And now, thanks to Gregory A. Fossedal's article, "Kemp-Bradley-Packwood" (*TAS*, August 1986), we are supposed to wonder if "credit for conceptual foresight" shouldn't go to "people like Joseph Pechman at the Brookings Institution—who were talking about reform twenty years ago."

Enough of this nonsense. I refer *TAS*'s readers to pages 174-175 of Milton Friedman's *Capitalism and Freedom* (paperback edition), where they will find Friedman's proposal for a flat tax, complete with supply-side reasoning. This classic work—is there a supply-sider who hasn't read it?—was first published in 1962, and is based on material originally presented in the fifties. Yet I have seen virtually no one give Friedman his due on this issue.

Whatever the differences between Friedman and the supply-siders, the venerable professor has done more than anyone else to pave the Road to Glory along which today's young hotshots now travel. The least they could do is acknowledge this fact, however grudgingly.

—David C. Young
New York, New York

Buildups

Although I am sympathetic to David Trachtenberg's arguments ("What Reagan Buildup?" *TAS*, September 1986), and while I am in agreement with the general thrust of his essay, he is, I think, wrong in some of his conclusions, or, at least the implications he draws from them.

First, admittedly MX deployment has been slow, and Midgetman promises to be slower. In the long run this will be much to our advantage. As Douglas Dalgleish and I have recently argued, neither of these missiles will be survivable in any of their reincarnations. Midgetman is extremely expensive, and hasn't even begun to have been priced out yet. I read it as another DIVAD. Now, surely Trachtenberg would not argue that we need a force of several hundred DIVADs!

Second, and more important, we will soon *have* a missile that is better than either the MX or the Midgetman. It is in design right now and will be deployed in 1989: the Trident II (D-5) missile. It is as accurate as the MX and can travel as far with an alteration in its payload. Current design calls for the D-5 to deliver 8-14 warheads of 475Kt each: MX carries 10 warheads of 170-204Kt each. Why in the world continue to develop three missiles when the Navy already has ensured that D-5 will be deployed? One hundred MX missiles will cost $20 billion. Given the cost of D-5s, Dalgleish and I estimated the savings of replacing MX/Midgetman with D-5s to be between $43 and $63 billion. Dropping D-5s in existing silos would require only a fraction of the cost of deployment of Midgetman. To continue to waste money on MX is silly, even *if* one buys the argument that we need an ICBM force on the ground, which I don't, for reason number three: Trident I (C-4) missiles are already probably capable of knocking out Soviet silos. In the two years since our book (*Trident*) came out, American SLBM accuracy, *even in existing missiles*, has increased due to deployment of better navigational devices in both subs and missiles. This fact has been made increasingly clear by the *downgrading* of the proposed range of the Trident II from 6000 n.m. to "over 4000." Deliverable megatonnage, or throw weight, is a function of range as much as instrumental accuracy. (If you are off a foot per mile over a mile distance, you're not off much; if you're off a foot over 10,000 miles, you're off a lot.) What does all of this mean? It means that U.S. advances in submarine technology have grown relative to the Soviets, and now U.S. planners are moving the subs "closer in" because they no longer need quite as much room to "hide." Thus, Trident II has been outfitted with more, newer, and more powerful warheads, thanks to the tradeoff in range. By 1990, Trident submarines will, for all practical purposes, displace land-based missiles.

Which brings me to my final point. Trachtenberg is correct only in a slightly technical way when he writes that Tridents "do not offset the greater number of U.S. launch platforms removed from service in recent years." Deployment of D-5 missiles will allow a per-Trident improvement of 96 warheads over existing C-4 missiles. This is a net gain of 672 warheads just in existing subs, not counting those to be deployed between now and 1989. But platforms, relatively speaking, are not as important as deliverable megatonnage, assuming a reasonable level of survivability of the platform. Trident missiles are also more accurate than Poseidons, and Trident missiles are mirved. "Deliverability" is the key, and seven Tridents, because of relative invulnerability, navigational accuracy, and evasive capabilities, can deliver *far* more megatonnage on the enemy than the obsolete subs they replaced.

All of these arguments actually defuse one of Trachtenberg's implied other points, namely, that it is dangerous that the Soviets are adding more ICBMs than we are. Good. Pray that they keep it up. It is somewhat like aborigines investing in more spears in the face of an enemy armed with howitzers and tanks. As our SLBMs get more accurate (not to mention the impact of SDI), ICBMs are becoming strategic dodo birds.

There are enough real defense problems to be concerned about without resorting to misrepresentations of some of our concrete and observable defense successes.

—Larry Schweikart
Assistant Professor of History
University of Dayton
Dayton, Ohio

(continued on page 59)

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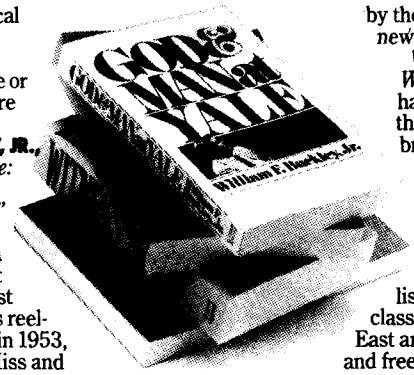

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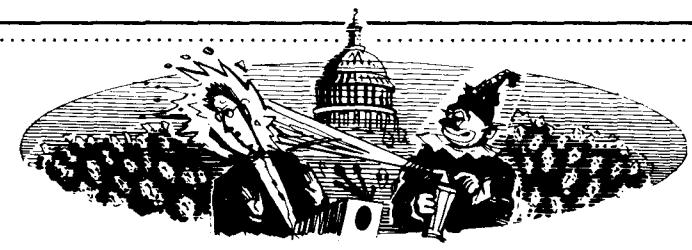

Every now and then, during the Save Chile rally in Dupont Circle last month, one of the soft, pretty fellows who were anchoring the event would bring things to a froth and bellow into the overworked p.a. system: "What do we want in Chile?" "Democracy Now!" the faithful would boom back. This was a crowd that knew what it wanted. And it knew how to get it, too. Ariel Dorfman, prof at Duke and (as night follows day) fellow at IPS, took the stage and interjected a pragmatic note. "We will triumph," he said, as his glasses slid down his nose, "because we are better than the others. We are better than the others because we have better words and better souls." As evidence, Dr. Dorfman whipped out a paper from the overstuffed pocket of his short-sleeved shirt and read a poem, a *vers libre* effort—apparently Dr. Dorfman's preferred form—called "Don't Believe Them." "If they say a tree is a tree," he recited slowly, "don't believe them. If they say a rock is a rock, don't believe them . . ." I knew there were more where those came from, so I struck up a conversation with a small lady who had shoved a petition at me. "If they say a petition is a . . ." I started to warn, but she interrupted me. "Let me explain," she said, then thought for a moment. "You see," she said finally, "in Chile, people are not allowed to vote. It is not like here. Here everybody can vote for who they want." "*Whom* they want," I said. "Prepositional object. For *whom* they want. Takes the dative case." She edged away from me. After Dr. Dorfman had unloaded a couple more poems, Pete Seeger, billed as the star of the rally, took the stage and strapped on his banjo. Cheerful as ever, he began reciting the words of what he called "one of his favorites," so we could all sing along. But the day was getting late. The would-be liberators of Chile had announced what they wanted (Democracy) and detailed when they wanted it (Now) and explained why they were entitled to it (the part about the souls). After that, maybe listening to Pete seemed supererogatory. With one failed verse behind him, he started up again, as the people wandered off. "Come on everybody! Let's try it again," he exclaimed, joyously. "How about the tenors for this one . . . let's go, the high ones—make it so they can hear you at the White House! . . . Maybe the key's too low, I'll make it higher . . . Okay! One More Time Now, *Everybody*!" The poor old scarecrow was on his third chorus and leaping and waving with all his energy toward the crowd, slowly dispersing. Maybe time has passed Pete by. Maybe the Chile thing isn't his thing. I don't know. But the more he flapped his arms the farther the faithful fanned out from the Circle. I figured I'd better go, too. "Sing peace on earth and see and sigh," Pete was singing. His creaky voice bounced lightly from the buildings on the Circle, but down the street you could barely hear it.

• • • • •

There has been some hubbub in Washington lately about Washington Harbour (that 'u' is always a bad sign), a new "multi-use city"—in truth, a large building with condominiums, offices, a restaurant, and a taxi stand—recently constructed alongside a bend in the Potomac, at the edge of Georgetown. From across the river Washington Harbour looks like a crumbling sandcastle, and the hubbub has arisen from the usual circumstance: The architect and his financial backers think it is wonderful and the people who have looked at it think it's a monstrosity. I first took note of the thing when the Potomac, its two-tiered, 1,000-seat restaurant, held a grand opening last month. The inaugural party sounded like the sort of dreadful affair that I would want to avoid at all costs—"Washington's flashiest party in many a year put Hollywood on the Potomac with some of New York City tossed in," as the *Washington Times* put it. This sort of "fun" appalls me: The guest list was littered with names like Dominique and Aniko, skinny women sashaying in slinky dresses, dripping South African diamonds amid a sea of shallow, tuxedo-clad power boys nodding off to one another's banal chatter, stuffing their overfed faces with *Turbot à Sorrel Beurre Blanc* and sloshing down magnums of Moët & Chandon—a herd of wild horses couldn't have dragged me to such an event. Also, I wasn't invited. But the inauguration achieved its goal and, commercially at least, the Harbour itself looks to be a success; there's a wait for tables at the Potomac every night, and the trade in condos and office space is brisk, even as the complaints about the Harbour's design grow almost as frenzied and loud as the building itself.

• • •

Arthur Cotton Moore, the Washington architect who designed the Harbour, took to the pages of the *Post*'s Outlook section one Sunday to defend his creation. Working from the premise that Washington was a "half-city, all Apollonian and no Dionysian," Mr. Moore wrote that his "design attempts a sort of Hegelian synthesis out of antagonistic movements in architecture. . . . Like verbs, curvilinear dynamic elements impart a sense of movement from subject to object, both of which are modified by 'adjective' supportive elements." Now I grant that these are the words of a desperate man. But they read far better than "My God, what have I done!" which were surely the words that leapt to Mr. Moore's mind when he first saw his completed building. Reading his piece you could only feel sympathetic, and I began to think that up close his building couldn't be as bad as he was implying. So one evening I walked down to Washington Harbour and discovered to my horror that his critics, and by implication Mr. Moore himself, were precisely right: Washington Harbour is stupendously ugly, the kind of mess that only a Hegelian could contrive.

• • •

There's something vertiginous to Mr. Moore's brainchild, with its countless chimneys and asymmetrical curves and bobbing turrets, and after a close examination I thought maybe I'd have a drink in the Potomac restaurant. If the Harbour is a sort of architectural Elephant Man, the Potomac is his flouncy sister, a Vegas showgirl flashing lots of thigh. Eight hundred thousand "glass jewels" speckle the ceiling; its vast carpet contains forty-nine colors weaved into an elaborate floral pattern; twenty-four chandeliers of purple and green glass sway from its ceiling; a toy train circumnavigates the room on a track built of brass. I ordered a drink. The waitresses—each one a beauty—are chipper in that tip-hungry, unbecoming manner of girls working their way through school. The house liquor is almost undrinkable, and the air conditioning is set on arctic freeze.

• • •

I took my drink out to the patio and settled in at a table close to the river, where passing motorboats released periodic bursts of diesel fumes into my Scotch. On my right was a table of earnest young men discussing the tax bill over a round of Bud Lights. Behind me, a sozzled woman was complaining to a friend. "He won't pay any attention to me," she said thickly. "What can I do to get his attention? Do it with his tennis partner? I *did* do it with his tennis partner, for God's sake." I quickly shifted my attention to a table of gossiping college girls on my left. "That was his *name*?" one girl said. "My God, I can't believe anybody'd have such a stupid name." "No," her friend said. "His name was *Tom*, but he wouldn't tell us what it was, so we just *called* him Rumpelstiltskin." I loudly called for my check. Mr. Moore may not know what he's done, but he picked the right city to do it in.

—GJN

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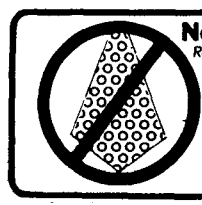

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CORRESPONDENCE
(continued from page 56)

David Trachtenberg replies:
I agree with Larry Schweikart's assessment of the D-5 SLBM as a major strategic improvement. Certainly, the D-5 will be a capable system and an important addition to the U.S. strategic deterrent. What I do not accept is his contention that the D-5 makes the U.S. ICBM force unnecessary.

There are, of course important operational differences between ICBMs and SLBMs. The two systems are complementary, not merely redundant. Each has different strengths and weaknesses. Communications remains the Achilles heel of the sea-based force. Basing the D-5 on land to alleviate this problem would present other difficulties. Dropping D-5s into existing ICBM silos might give the Soviets a less expensive target to destroy (a debatable point), but it would do nothing to solve the land-based missile vulnerability problem.

National security is insured not by choosing the cheapest weapons available, but by choosing the ones most suitable for a given deterrent role. The real issue is not whether the D-5 would cost less than the MX or Midgetman, but rather the wisdom of restoring a credible ICBM force. There are compelling political, economic, and strategic reasons for maintaining this leg of the Triad. Further, Soviet anti-submarine warfare (ASW) advances are not to be dismissed lightly. Giving the Soviets fewer platforms to track and target can hardly complicate their ASW task.

Most troubling, however, is Mr. Schweikart's contention that I should not worry about the prospect of an even newer generation of Soviet ICBMs pointed in the general direction of my suburban Washington townhouse. If ICBMs are becoming "strategic dodo birds" it is not because our SLBMs are becoming more accurate, but because we are unwilling to defend them in the face of a mounting Soviet ICBM threat that Mr. Schweikart professes we need not worry about.

Bradford and the Classics
In a lively and provocative review of Forrest McDonald's *Novus Ordo Seclorum* and M. E. Bradford's *Remembering Who We Are* (*TAS*, May 1986), Professor Charles R. Kesler, in addition to making some incisive criticisms about contemporary conservative political thought on the Constitution, criticizes M. E. Bradford's "recollections of Roman history, which need to be refreshed by some attention to Roman texts."

Bradford's essays on Roman texts are studies of the way those texts were understood by, and so how they influenced, American thinkers and writers. This is true of his essay on *Romanitas* and the South in *Generations of the Faithful Heart* as well as his essay on the Classics and the generation of the Founders in *A Better Guide than Reason*, the book that Professor Kesler appears to be criticizing in his *Spectator* review, since the essays in *A Better Guide than Reason* fit Professor Kesler's animadversions better than the essays in *Remembering Who We Are.*

There is more than one way to approach the Classics. One may attempt to understand them on their own terms, as do many Classical historians and some literary critics. One may try to fit them into a theory or vision of our own days, whether Freud's or Derrida's or Strauss's. It is legitimate, however, to attempt to understand what the ancient authors meant to some group in the past. The Germans, following Hans Robert Jauss, speak of *Rezeptionsgeschichte*, the study of how one group or generation in the past understood another group or author or work in the still more distant past, and talk of the Constance School.

Reviewers often wish that writers had written another book than the one that did get written. In this case, however, I, for one, cannot agree. Bradford seems to me most successful when he is appreciating what the Classical Past meant to Our Past. It is a conscious choice. "The best way to recover Roman history as it signified to the English Whig or likeminded commonwealthsman of the late eighteenth century is to ignore such diverting questions as what it meant to the republican historians. . . . Or what it means to Western man today." (*A Better Guide than Reason*, p. 4)

Now that Meyer Reinhold's *Classica Americana* has made so much important material easily available for scholars, I fervently hope that M. E. Bradford will step back from his work on contemporary Southern writers and compose the big book on "The Reception of the Greek and Latin Classics in the Early American Republic" which he is so superbly equipped to write. There are not many other scholars who can write so well on Faulkner, but there are a few. I can think of no other so well prepared to give us the nitty-gritty feel of what the Classics meant to the generation of the Founding Fathers.

—E. Christian Kopff
Department of Classics
University of Colorado
Boulder, Colorado

THE MOST BORING

part of *The American Spectator*, the oyster in the pearl, is this little card. None of Tyrrell's amusing musings here. Not one of those polished insights, not a trace of those brilliant polemics found in the rest of the magazine. Nothing but the leaden prose of some dolt in circulation trying to get your name, address and a check. Humor the rapscallion. **SUBSCRIBE.**

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CURRENT WISDOM

Pro Wrestling Illustrated

A learned epistle in the correspondence section of a respected cultural review, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, the grapplers' Bible:

About two months ago, I was watching the WWF's TNT telecast. Adrian Adonis was being interviewed by Vince McMahon. Adrian, on camera, admitted to being gay.

As a Constitutional lawyer, devoting my life to civil liberties, I was overjoyed at Adrian's revelation.

A most reliable barometer for measuring the level of tolerance and enlightened benevolence of a given society is the degree of magnanimity offered to those with sexual preferences that are at variance with the majority of people who compose the society.

Tolerance for and acceptance of gay rights and a matter-of-fact acknowledgment of the full humanity of gay men and lesbian women is still desperately needed in American culture. Religious fanatics, these self-proclaimed real estate brokers of heaven, pronounce their hateful disdain for all who are different or who depart from their narrow dogma.

In a climate of expanding fundamentalism and the accompanying horror of religious intolerance, it is heartening to see someone like Adrian Adonis force the public to dispense with its stereotyped notions of gay people. Adrian is indisputably a very tough man. For the public to have to perceive such a fierce fighter in the context of being gay is for the public to have to acknowledge that great physical prowess can accompany avowed homosexuality. The result is that people will have a greater respect for gay individuals.

Adrian Adonis is to be congratulated for his political and social courage. As a lifelong wrestling fan, I am proud that my favorite form of sports-entertainment is at the cutting edge of social change.

—Edward Tabash
Beverly Hills, CA
[August 1986]

Parade

The lessons of history tellingly laid out by Senator Lugar's bootblack, Mr. Lloyd Shearer, in Mr. Shearer's potent "Intelligence Report":

Fifty years ago, when Ronald Reagan was 25 and Margaret Thatcher was 10, Adolf Hitler hastened his persecution of the Jews in Germany. At the time, many anti-fascists in the U.S. and Great Britain advocated sanctions of the strongest sort be taken against Nazi Germany. Well-intentioned but mistaken government officials in London and Washington, however, believed that such reprisals would prove counterproductive and drive the Nazis to wreak further revenge on the Jews. No effective measures were therefore enacted, and the Holocaust ensued. People who oppose meaningful sanctions against the Botha regime in South Africa should not forget the awful price of that appeasement.

[August 31, 1986]

Washington Post

On the "Style" page of the *Washington Post*, New Age anthropologist Art Harris applies himself to his discipline for the advancement of human knowledge:

MIAMI—He's tall and trim, like some GQ model in jeans and bright Perry Ellis shirt, unbuttoned to the waist, as he sweeps from behind the bar to hug an ex-lover who has dropped in to say hello. It's midafternoon off busy U.S. 1 here, where he tends bar and sets a mean hors d'oeuvre tray for happy hour.

Soon customers will be pushing through the door, searching out love in the cool darkness, hiding out from the heat and the hate, and if they are regulars he will have their drinks waiting. He exudes energy, a warm smile. They like his style, the turquoise watch band matching the tiny lapis in his earlobe.

"I was 18 when we met," says his ex, elbows on the bar. "He was 21. It was a major romance. We were goo-goo-eyed . . .

"We were together 18 months, then became best friends. That's unusual in the gay world, [where] people usually don't speak to each other after they break up."

Everyone is speaking to Michael Hardwick these days, the new symbol of gay rights denied in a straight world—even though he lost his fight over Georgia's sodomy law after taking it all the way to the Supreme Court.

[August 21, 1986]

Nation

From the authoritative *Nation* comes the unwelcome news that coke and capitalism are Siamese twins and urgent surgery is needed:

Psychological escape, self-destructive rebellion and antisocial activity are built into the system of competition, greed and authoritarianism that the Reagan revolution promotes. Drug abuse is not a very healthy antidote to the debilitating system, but it is an immediately available one, and you cannot remove the one without changing the other.

[August 30, 1986]

Humanist

Cultural criticism gets serious at a worthy journal of neotericism. Men's Studies, indeed!:

This book, despite its small size, effectively addresses nearly every issue pertinent to men's liberation. As editors of *Men Talk*, Elliot Fried and Barry Singer have done us a wonderful service. Their poetry anthology is a profound book about men's experiences and should be required reading for any men's studies course. More importantly, it is a book of poetry in the true sense of the word—the language is pure, inspired, beautiful. At last we see the beginnings of a true literature for men.

[May/June 1986]

Rolling Stone

A touching social note, offered up lovingly in a journal for the culturally advanced:

Their courtship could have been the video for Joe Jackson's old song "Is She Really Going Out with Him?" But *Dynasty*'s Heather Locklear married Motley Crue's Tommy Lee anyway—for better *and* for worse—at the Santa Barbara Biltmore last month. Surprisingly, their wedding was a formal sedate affair, Crue member Nikki Six was a well-mannered best man, and fellow group members Vince Nell and Mick Mars were attentive ushers. Vince was even teetotaling all day. The only way to tell this was a rock & roll wedding was the spectacle of Tommy chewing gum as he walked down the aisle. But when his mother told him to ditch it, he complied. The Crue will return to their "normal" habits and habitats—recording their next LP, due late fall—once the honeymoon is over and after Vince has served his month-long jail sentence for vehicular manslaughter.

[July 3, 1986]

Mother Jones

Immensities proffered to the subverbal hysterics who read *Mother Jones* between trips to the herbal tea shoppe and the drug therapy center:

Several vivid urges and anxieties leap from the screen of the supershow to which children's commercial TV adds up: an explosive release of aggression as superheroes and robotic saviors solve all human problems while playing with fantasy versions of the Reagan military budget; unfettered acquisitionism as advertisers pull out all the stops to induce kids to really *want*; and managed emotion in which tiny humanoid beings intervene to correct our inability to feel, love, hug, and care. Along with these go a pervasive sense of nuclear anxiety, an uneasiness with science and technology bordering on paranoia, and a stance of passivity in which humans are shown to be totally resourceless and must rely on nonhuman creatures to help, nurture, and defend them. In sum, it leaves us with a TV-generated vision of Americans as a nation of over-armed, trigger-happy, grasping, anxious, and love-starved people who feel deeply sorry for themselves and beleaguered in the world—something, that is, of a self-portrait of the Reagan era.

[September 1986]

Judaism

Old Sodom seen in the light of modern science:

If virtually every living creature was wicked, they could not have dwelt together in towns. But what if they were sick? I venture to suggest that the problem was one of public health rather than of public depravity, medical rather than moral. Virtually every living creature in Sodom could have been ailing as the result of imbibing some local toxin, and only the itinerant among them—Lot, the king, caravan merchants—remaining physically and socially healthy.

[Summer 1986]

Presbyterian Survey

Presbyterian poetry for the New Age by Mr. Sam R. Hope, the unworthy and the inconsolable:

His casket
is covered with wildflowers
picked from the field
where he was killed.
I reach between two soldiers
and touch him
wishing to say farewell
to this young man
I never met.
One of the pallbearers,
perhaps sixteen,
rifle strapped to his back,
forces back his tears
and his anger.
I am unworthy
to share these moments
because
I paid the *contras*
to kill him. *—Sam R. Hope*

[June 1986]

Sunday Telegraph

The Third World whoop-whoop intoned *andante con brio* by Sr. Daniel Ortega in his closing remarks at the recent meeting of nonaligned nations held in booming Harare, Zimbabwe:

We are for independence, freedom, justice, respect for humanity, dedication to peace and progress and against imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism, apartheid, racism, Zionism, and all forms of aggression, occupation, domination, hegemonism, and foreign influence.

[August 7, 1986]

New York Review of Books

The incessantly lachrymose Murray Kempton sniffles and snorts his way through the Sandinistas' Nicaragua only to discover that the hellish contras are warring against Little League:

In Esteli one Sunday morning, the sound of a drum is heard and a column of children approaches. Here in full force can only be the armed New Man grown from dragon's teeth planted by the revolution. And then there arises from this formation a martial chant at once and unmistakably translatable as "Gimme an E, gimme an M, gimme an A. . . ." The uniforms are pin-striped: what confronts the visitor's shuddering eye is the terrible presence of the Little League baseball team of the barrio of Emaor.

Children very much like these were killed in a *contra* raid not twenty miles from Esteli three weeks before, and now, in its ineffable poltroonery, the Congress of the United States has tripled the subsidy that bought this milestone on the march to Nicaragua's redemption and will now speed the business along three times as fast and three times as far. Let the glad cry ring forth from bastion to bastion in the United States: "Yesterday three kids in a peasant's compound in the hills; tomorrow the Little League team from Emaor."

[August 14, 1986]

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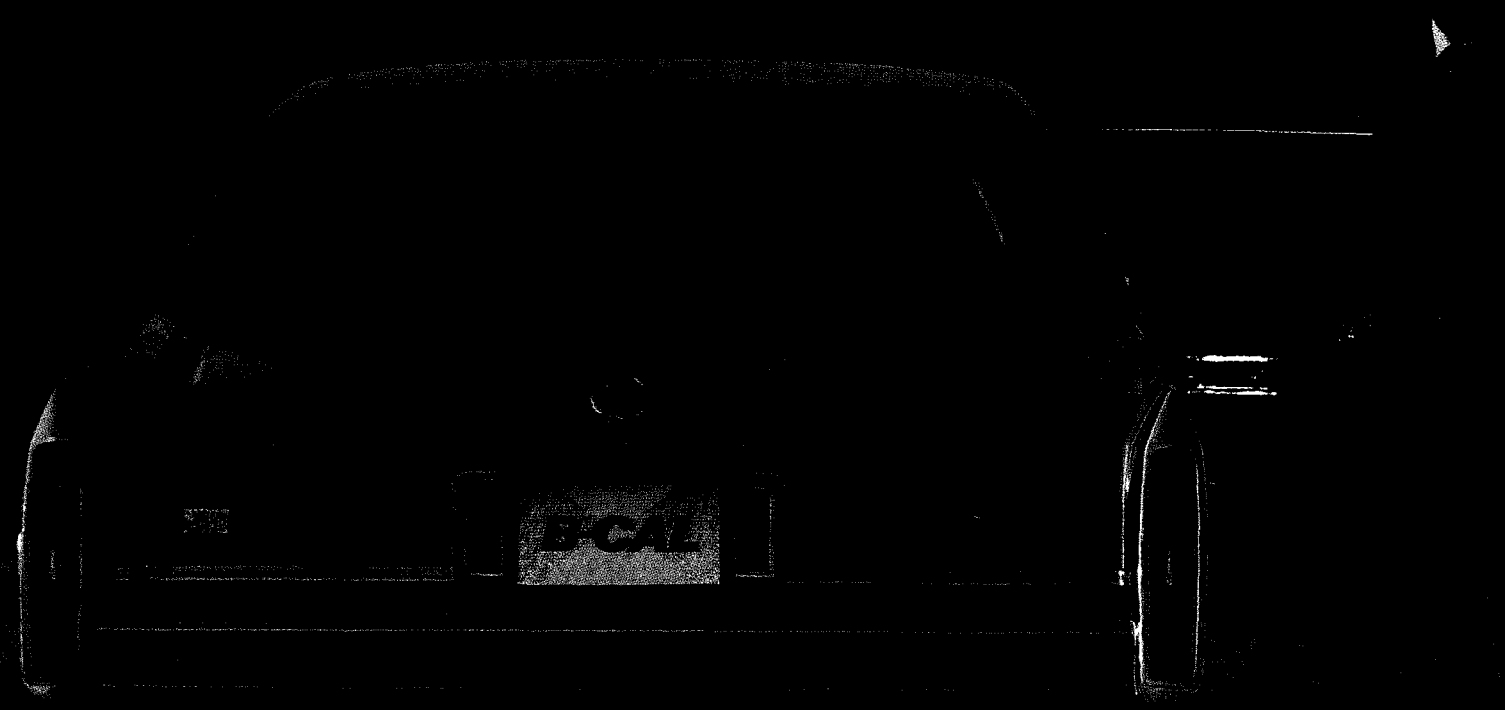

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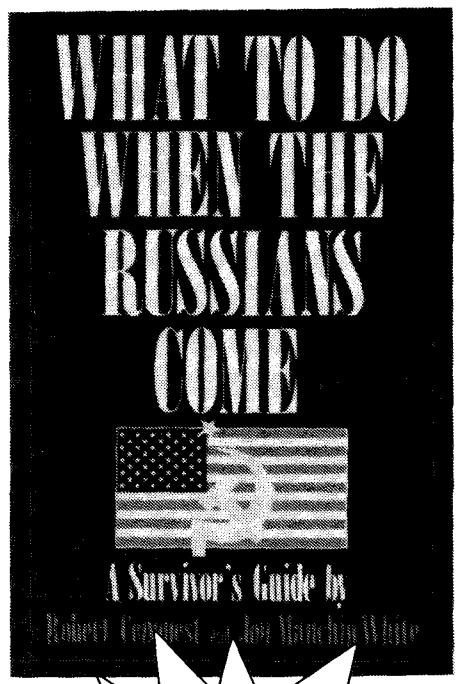

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